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Issue 2 • December 1996 £3.00

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NeST 90:100/315.0@nest.ftn

Unfortunately we cannot enter into personal correspondence to answer Atari related questions although we will naturally do our best to help you through the Q&A section of the magazine. It would also be helpful if letters, subscription enquiries and editorial material were on separate sheets within the same envelope. Ideally letters and editorial material should be on disk in ASCII format.

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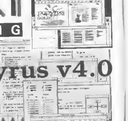
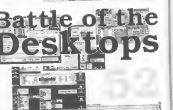


Papyrus v4.0

Version 4 of the excellent document processer from HiSoft is finally available but was it worth the wait?



Battle of the Desktops

You'll never trust a camera again after reading our in-depth review of positive image!

Positive Image

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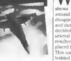

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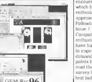

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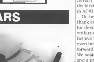


HAPPY DAYS

We've climbed a steep learning curve since our launch at the September shows. We sold out of magazines around 2pm both days! After disappointing people at the shows and during the following week we decided to reprint Issue 1. This took several weeks to organise and resulted in delays for everyone who placed their order after the shows. This issue sees our print run trebled from our first guesstimate and the page count raised to 64 pages!

Thanks for all your letters of encouragement and offers of help which have helped maintain our enthusiasm as the deadlines approach and panic sets in. Following on from the success of Issue 1, bearing in mind Atari Computing is put together by enthusiasts in our spare time, we have had to restructure the AICIG to cope with the overwhelming demand. This means the contact points have been changed - please read the masthead for details. The survey forms are still coming in and first indications are encouraging. It seems you like the mag! Due to an oversight our Swedish readers haven't had their say yet so we've decided to print the survey results in AC#3.

On behalf of the AICIG I'd like to thank each and every contributor for devoting their time and enthusiasm for our benefit! We believe this issue has turned out even better than AC#1 and look forward to reading your comments. We wish you all a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Joe Connor

THE NEWS

HADES/SCSI-BURSTER

Abingdon Synthesis Projects (ASP) bursts onto the scene

The SCSI-Burster is a new product from this new company It fits into a standard PC case of any normal configuration (Desktop tower etc) and allows an external SCSI aware machine like the Atari ST fitted with an ACSI-SCSI converter to use internal PC SCSI devices Externally cased SCSI devices such as hard disks tape streamers CD-ROMs and removable media are more expensive than their internal equivalents The SCSI-Burster range costs from £18 for the basic three internal connector/one external connector cable so substantial savings are possible even for a minimal hard disk plus CD-ROM setup The other advantage is a welcome reduction in the "Cable-Spaghetti" behind your machine because PC cases typically have a PSU through socket for connection to another mains powered device Telephone Abingdon Synthesis Projects (ASP) on +44 (0)1235 534152

The Hades - an Atari Super Computer?

Brought into Britain by System Solutions the Hades 040/060 is probably the fastest TOS-based computer on the face of the earth Available in both 68040 and 68060 flavours (for £1995 and £2395 respectively), the Hades features a vast array of ports and interfaces that can take an overwhelming selection of input and output devices The Hades is the first TOS compatible computer to possess 4 PCI slots PCI being a exceptionally fast bus which enables input and output of data to and from devices like graphics cards and SCSI ports This means super-fast access to all of your peripherals Whilst building the Hades the designers have kept TOS/GEM compatibility very much in mind The Hades features a VME bus for example and MIDI modem, LAN printer ports etc everything you'd expect on a standard Atari (with the exception of a cartridge slot) The memory is another case in point Although you can install up to 1 Gigabyte (yes really!) every single byte is seen by the operating system (a modified TOS 3 06) as ST RAM - albeit running at TT RAM speed! In pure speed terms the 060 model is equivalent to a 200MHz Pentium! A truly professional system for the most demanding of Atarians System Solutions tell us they are able to build Hades systems to the customers exact specifications So if you ve got deep pockets then give them a call on +(0)181 693 3355 At the same time could you lend us a tenner?

Technical Specs. Internal

- 4x PCI Bus
- 2x ISA Bus
- 1x VME Bus
- 1x EIDE (enhanced IDE) with a maximum 10Mb/s for two devices
- 1x SCSI with a maximum 4Mb/s for 1-7 devices (TT compatible)

External

- Modem 1 (25 way D-Sub) with a maximum 19,200 baud
- Modem 2 (9 way D-Sub) with a maximum 250 000 baud.
- Local talk (8 pin Mini DIN) with a maximum 250 000 baud
- Printer (25 way D-Sub Falcon/TT compatible)
- Midi In/Out
- PC Keyboard connection (standard)
- Mouse and Joystick (Atari compatible)

MagiC World

In a swathe of new releases this month System Solutions have brought out several products for their flagship operating system MagiC Firstly we have an update to the current operating system taking it to version 5 It offers (over version 4) increased compatibility long filename support multithreading support for 128 concurrent programs or windows support for DOS compatible partitions, an enhanced desktop and lots of smaller changes and updates. Upgrades available now for £19 95 MagiC PC is also now available. It s the MagiC operating system ported to IBM compatible computers - In less technical jargon "it lets you run Atari software on your PC" You'll need a fast PC to run MagiC PC on, of course emulating 68000 code on an Intel processor takes a lot of grunt System Solutions recommend a 486 DX4 100 as a minimum - but we suspect you only get the best from the emulator on a Pentium system. MagiC PC runs as a window inside the Windows 95 desktop and is fully multitasking It offers resolutions in any sizes using up to 16 colours - for more you need NVDI PC It gives you direct access to all your system peripherals but, like MagiCMac as there s no cartridge port there s no way to run dongle protected software like Cubase! As mentioned above, NVDI PC is also available This greatly enhances the display speed of MagiC PC as well as giving access to vector font technology GDOS printing etc. It also enables MagiC PC to run in screen modes greater than 16 colour 256, 16-bit and 24-bit colour are all possible MagiC PC costs £145, with NVDI PC at £69 95 However a bundle price is available for £199 There are also a range of different upgrades, cross-grades and bundle prices available talk to System Solutions on +44 (0)181 693 3355

Titan Announce Videlity

Titan recently sent us some mouth watering statistics showing the TrueColor resolutions possible with their Falcon accelerator, the Nemesis

Falcon with Nemesis at 24/48MHz - all are non-interlaced resolutions 16-bit (65 536 colours per screen) on a standard 14" VGA non-multisync! With a half-decent multi-sync it can be expected that even higher resolutions can be seen!

	CPU Bus	CPU	Video Bus	Refresh (Hz)
640x480	24	24	24	60
720x528	24	24	24	50
576x432	20	20	20	60

When used with their powerful image processing software the results must be pretty special! What makes this possible is the solid 24MHz bus performance of the Nemesis board in the Falcon the graphics performance is tied to the bus as it uses conventional memory for the screen However what makes this snippet of information even more interesting is the software that Titan used and intend to sell to generate these extended resolutions It's called Videlity and threatens to take the current duopoly of ScreenBlaster and BlowUP to task. Videlity was originally developed to support APEX Alpha for creating high resolution displays and a portion of the code will be supplied with this program to form part of the complete software/hardware suite - APEX Alpha Videlity and Nemesis We also expect Videlity to become a "must have" option, particularly for Nemesis owners but also for users having a standard Falcon Videlity provides extremely reliable resolution switching and fixes many bugs that are apparent in TOS, including some anomalies that seem to exist in NVDI Rather than be constrained by fixed resolution settings which are apparent in other screen expanders Videlity allows fast operation and complete flexibility in all operations Price and availability are yet to be determined but if you're a Falcon owner it's certainly one to look out for Talk to Titan on +44 (0)121 993 6669

Inexpensive Dry Colour Printing on the Horizon.

The one thing that lets current inkjet based colour printers down is the fact that ink is wet or rather that the ink makes the paper wet causing slight distortion and bleeding The alternative, colour laser output is still horrendously expensive and liable to stay that way at least into next year With their interest in all things graphical, Titan Designs have been looking into the newest crop of "Micro Dry" printers What they've told us is enough to make even the most monochrome of mouths drool Colour printing at 600x600 dpi using this completely dry method gives photo-realistic output on standard paper and monochrome output (at a staggering 1200x600 dpi) is sharp and crisp In addition the printer is able to output spot colours in a range of metallic inks Gold silver cyan and magenta will be available initially for £9 95 a cartridge. CYMK cartridges (for standard colour printing) will be £7 95 each with the printer retailing for a reasonable £469 We will definitely be keeping an eye on this one!

HD-Driver v6

HD-Driver now at version 6 has become the de-facto standard for hard disk driving on the Atari over the past few years If you're an owner of HD-Driver then you'll be glad to know that System Solutions have just released v6 A range of inexpensive upgrade options are available not that at £29 95 HD Driver is particularly costly in the first place! Version 6 offers a much re-worked interface easier to use and more intelligently grouped functions There is now a highly configurable disk formatting mode - including support for media with different physical sector sizes like magno-optical drives The partitioning has also been revamped enabling you to create DOS/Atari compatible partitions delete individual partitions repair partitions etc In addition there's a new Auto Configuration option which automatically tells the driver which devices are connected to your computer If you're upgrading from an earlier version of HD Driver there are even more new features to look for The list is huge far too big to list completely here but here are just a few

Background DMA with MagiC 4 (or greater) which enables MagiC to go on multitasking during disk access

- Password protect Zip drives
- Parity checks on TTs and Falcons
- Partitions above 1Gb on the ACSI port (MagiC 4/5 required)
- NEWMEDIA program simulates a media change for removable drives which do not properly tell your computer when you change disk.
- CAF_FIX is included to fix a Falcon hardware bug which can cause problems with Cubase Audio
- Partition Assignment enables you to fix drive identifiers to ASCI SCSI and IDE ids
- Enhanced support for removable media
- Support for Phasewriter Drives (PD)

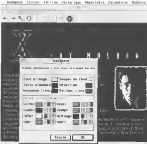
The HD-Driver package remains at £29 95 with upgrades from v4 or 5 at £15 and from earlier versions at £20 The package includes a newly developed manual Talk to System Solutions on +44 (0)181 693 3355

STOP.PRESS.STOP.PRESS

Horrific Browser War to Develop on Atari?

Are we about to see a gargantuan Web browser war develop on the Atari akin to that going on between Netscape and Microsoft on the PC? Well probably not - Atari owners are more sensible aren't they? But there's no denying that a new browser from France is about to shake CAB's current monopoly on the

▼A new French browser looks pretty slick doesn't it?



Atari platform We don't know too much about the program as the screen grab was shoved under our noses less than 24 hours before we went to press - but we decided it was well worth including in this issues news If you re an on-line Atarian (and if not, why not?) then we think you'll agree this is very good news for the future of the Atari internet

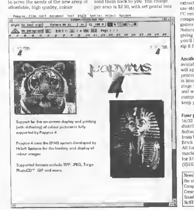
PAPYRUS v4

Papyrus v4 at last!

After what seems an age, Papyrus v4 the superb word-processing package is now with us - and we think you'll agree it's been worth the wait Almost re-written from scratch this release builds on the fluid most usable of interfaces to give a better look and even more functionality The re-write has enabled the author to optimise the code further, providing greater speed and compatibility You know that everyone keeps on mentioning "well written GEM programs" with regard to new operating systems? Well Papyrus is that program! This version of Papyrus is also the first to offer full colour support in any resolution and colour mode This includes colour output - just in time to serve the needs of the new army of affordable, high quality, colour printer owners To complement this Technicolor dawn Hisoft have added their own EFMS system to Papyrus enabling your to load in a wide range of graphics formats A number of annoying limitations have been removed - for example there is now no (practical) limit to the number of vector fonts Papyrus can use. It is also much better and faster at handling long documents and the search speed has been greatly improved In addition all copies of Papyrus v4 including upgrades come with a CD packed with 500 fonts Far from being low standard public domain - or worse incomplete shareware! - these fonts come directly from the BitStream type foundry and are of the highest quality Upgrades are available for $49 95 from Hisoft and other Atari dealers The full package costs $149

Atari Friendly Scanning Service

Floppyshop have just announced a photo scanning service aimed at Atari owners without CD-ROMs They will take your photographs (3 minimum, up to 6"x4") scan them into either GIF TIFF PNG or JPEG format and send them back to you The charge per scan is $2 50, with set postal fees of $1 25 in the UK going up to $2 25 in Europe and $3 00 to the Rest of the World Whilst this service is aimed fairly and squarely at home owners who want to view a few snaps on their Atari Floppyshop meister Steve Delaney is happy to talk to any interested graphics professionals with more demanding needs You can email him on sdelaney@stell wintermute co uk or call him on +44 (0)1224 586208 Tuesday Wednesday or Thursday between 9am and 4pm



Support for the on-screen display and printing (with dithering) of colour pictures is fully supported by Papyrus 4

Papyrus 4 uses the EFMS system developed by HiSoft Systems for the loading and display of colour images

Supported formats include TIFF JPEG, Targa PhotoCD™ GIF and more.

Snippets

Floppyshop - Positive Image 1 12 now available this release fixes a few bugs and adds loading of compressed BMP images and adds support for NOVA graphics cards In addition all new versions come with a 68040 processor friendly version that takes advantage of special coding techniques for the new breed of Atari clone

---

System Solutions have a TOS extractor available to enable you to use standard TOS under the MagiC PC emulator This gives even greater compatibility so much so that some games are playable on the PC! Naturally System Solutions will not be giving out versions of TOS on disk you'll have to have your own Atari to rip it from

---

Another new Atari clone will soon be available The Phoenix, from France, will sport either 68040 or 68060 processors and a DSP chip Very little is known about the computer at this stage but it sounds pretty powerful and will be sold at a price comparable with other clones We'll keep you posted!

Four play from 16/32

16/32 have recently signed deals to distribute Team from Impact Software Substation and Obsession from Unique Developments and Multi Brick a Breakout clone from France. All four games run on STe/Falcon machines and are expected to retail for £19 each Contact 16/32 on +44 (0)1634 710788

News? Gossip? Why not let everyone in on the secret send it to us at. Atari Computing, "Rois Bheinn" Overton Crescent, Johnstone PA5 8JB, SCOTLAND Email ataricomputing@cix.co.uk or NeST:90:100/315 0@nest ftn

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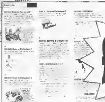

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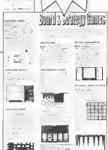

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Letters

A PAT ON THE BACK!

Great first issue! It's nice to see articles on real computing. I've often felt previous magazines spent too much time on articles getting operating systems (Geneva, MiNT, MagiC etc.) to run, and not much of any substance, just one of the reasons I stopped buying every issue. Two problems: I have looked and looked again but cannot see any subscription information. Is this an oversight or a policy decision? Also, in the same vein, it was unclear where I should order a reader disk from - there are plenty of addresses on page four but which one do I use? Keep up the good work.

John Lawrence, via the Internet

Erm... we have an article on setting up MiNT and AES replacements in this issue. It is both practical and of substance so I don't understand your point, please explain... The subscription information in this issue is on page 58. Evaluation copies of issue one should have included a separate subscription form - subscribers will automatically be invited to renew their subscription.

Issue 1 came last week and hells bells this is some publication! Straight to the point, no frills or stupid comments, a real punch on the nose for any Atari doubters. Positive is an understatement with a "go get-em no time wasters" realism nobody could put down. This is a real professional publication targeted at the committed core and to have the support from AC at this stage in the game is staggering. I've changed my earlier selfish attitude since the days when I used to write to Vic Lennard and Andrew Wright condemning games coverage because I thought then - and still do that Ataris can offer a great deal more potential than pinging a sprite around a screen. I believe full coverage of all areas of interest and ongoing support for the Shareware scene are vital to maintain interest in our platform. For me, the Atari platform is about genuinely committed people, authors, support services and contributors and so on. I feel saying "thanks" is inadequate to the people who had the sheer guts to get AC up and running but can add my plea that we as enthusiasts can get actively involved by making contributions to AC to ensure its continued success. That's about it for this reel but I would like to float an idea. How about an AC Roadshow with "Hands on training days"? It could run practical workshops including topics such as "How to get on line".

Steve Whitehead, Swindon

I was looking forward to AC#1 with a mixture of anticipation and a certain degree of anxiety wondering if Mike and the team would finally get the mag to press. You did it - great! I really admire you guys for what you just did. For two reasons. First because it was a challenge to start a magazine in an area where the biggest fish up to now had given up. Second because you have put together the final link which connects, on a regular basis, the entire community of Atari enthusiasts in the UK and in other countries - even foreign (froglegs-eating) people like me who have been regular and satisfied subscribers to ST Review, Atari World and ST Format over the years. When I opened the magazine, my first reaction was disappointment: no bright colours and no glossy pictures! On reflection I realised I had missed the point. What I actually wanted was the contents, the sharing of a common interest. The need to know lots of other people are still using this machine of ours and we're going to make it live on for at least another couple of years. What I want most of all is for this magazine to survive, and with this in mind the aesthetic aspects are far less important than the contents. Now a couple of criticisms (constructive I hope):

- If you want to stay in black and white print be careful with advertiser's boxes which are plain grey (AC#1 page 2).

Ed: We were also disappointed to see how poorly the TUS advert appeared - so much so we manually replaced the titles when we reprinted AC#1! Happily most of the editorial content turned out fine.

- I find the font you have chosen in the articles a bit tiring to read after several pages - or is it just me?

Ed: In trial layouts we used a sans serif Swiss variant for body text but switched to penzance after much discussion. We like it so unless we get a torrent of letters asking us to change it you'll have to read a few pages at a time then have a rest - at least the magazine will provide an even longer read this way!

Some requests: I would like to see more news about events on the Atari scene both in the UK and world-wide. The joystick article was good. How about something on the cartridge port? Do you plan opening a Readers Ads section? Some games solutions or cheats? That's all for now. Bye bye and best wishes. I keep my fingers crossed for you.

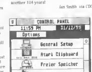
Thierry Sutter, Paris, France

Ed: We include anything newsworthy and we'll expand coverage if necessary. Our editorial coverage is dependent on our overworked contributors and although I try to maintain a balanced magazine I am at their mercy. We've considered adding a Reader Ads section but due to the extended period between issues remain unconvinced of its value - persuade us! If anyone sends us game solutions or cheats we'll be happy to print them.

Millennium Bug

Following the recent Money programme feature I couldn't resist testing my trusty Atari. Taking a deep breath I went into the control panel, set the time to 11:59 and the date to 31/12/99 and watched the clock tick over to 00. I saved the desktop and checked the file creation date - which was correctly shown as 1/1/00. I tried sorting by date and that also worked perfectly - our platform is good for another 104 years!

Ian Smith, via CIX



I wonder if Atari Computing will still be around?

Letters and editorial contributions should be sent to: Atari Computing, 65 Mill Road, Colchester, CO4 5LJ. Email: acg@inactive.compulink.co.uk

Goody two Shows!

Two Atari shows sponsored by Goodman International took place on Saturday 28th September in Birmingham and Sunday 29th in London Back when we were planning the launch of Atari Computing we saw these shows as the last best hope of securing a future for the magazine and we're delighted to report we completely sold out our stock at both shows!

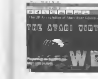
For the first time in many years the show had an upbeat feel to it, attendance was up with over 400 through the doors in Birmingham and over 300 in London Almost every company with an interest in the Atari marketplace took a stand

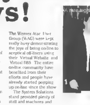
Mike Goodman MD of Goodman International put in many months hard work to make the shows a reality I asked Mike for his thoughts after the event "Apart from raiding the restaurant for extra tables in London there were no unforeseen problems - much to my surprise and relief After requests from all quarters I can honestly say I would do it again so I'll see you all at the next show OK?"

Mike's own stand did a roaring trade in PD/Shareware disks and end of line commercial software Copies of the excellent CAD program Technobox Drafter were on sale for £24 95 (originally £199 from Silica) If you fancy a Doom style 3D action game on an ST/STe machine Destruction imminent at £9 99 is well worth a look (reviewed in this issue Ed)

Out went the formal seminars to be replaced by the massed ranks of the user groups power without the price to the people!

Scotland was represented by Scotland's TOS/Atari Group (STAG) Most of the committee and many members made the long haul south to Birmingham and a few even continued down to London They manned the UKAAUG stand collected a few new members and cemented many on-line friendships face to face Al Goold STAG chairman added "I hope rumours of a Scottish show next spring materialise"

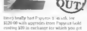



A rare sight - a happy editor and publisher!

The Wessex Atari User Group (WAG) were kept really busy demonstrating the joys of being on-line to sceptical off-liners using their Virtual Website and Virtual BBS The entire on-line community have benefited from their efforts and people have already started popping up on-line since the show

The System Solutions stand provided plenty of staff and machines and were showing off their product range to good advantage MagiC PC was available for the first time in the UK and copies of MagiC v5 and NVDI 4 were flying off the stand Texel was publicly demonstrated HD-Driver v6 was available and a lot of people tried out new products like Photoline the Infopedia 2 the DTP graphics CD-ROMs and the Ultimate Cubase CD-ROM Karl Brandt co-owner of System Solutions was grinning like the Cheshire Cat, showing all and sundry his new baby the Hades Super Atari

HiSoft (yes they made the shows this time) finally had Papyrus 4 on sale for £120 00 with upgrades from Papyrus Gold costing £39 in exchange for which you get an A5 20 page manual addendum update disk and free Bitstream CD containing 500 TrueType and PostScript fonts



Titan Designs and Black Scorpion Software were demonstrating APEX Alpha, Nemesis and APEX Audio publicly for the first time The awesome Afterburner040 accelerator was seen running in conjunction with Nemesis running APEX Alpha faster than ever before Titan has added UK distribution of Gribnif software to its ever expanding range of products David Encill reported (apart from Nemesis orders) 14Mb Falcon memory upgrades were their most popular product and they ran out of stock on Saturday He added "Overall the shows were a great success which proved the Atari platform is alive and kicking!"

The Upgrade Shop (TUS) were shifting hardware off their stand at an impressive rate they ran out of hard drives at London

The FaST club who attended the Birmingham show took the opportunity to promote Gemulator for laptops enabling Atari emulation on any PC running Windows 95 without additional hardware The latest Imagecopy Version was selling well along with a new Calamus font catalogue produced by Dave Howell Nexus Publishing which looks great but is probably several years too late to make any real impact Copies of ST Applications our UK rival magazine sold out by mid afternoon

Floppyshop launched Positive Image an affordable image editing package for £49 95 (introductory price £65 normally £75) The stand was well stocked with colourfully packaged copies of their other commercial products and were giving away copies of their catalogue on recycled disks

16/32 had the most comprehensive selection of games for all Atari machines Show specials included Robinson's Requium at £25 (normally £30) Lynx machines for £29 and Jaguar consoles including Alien Predator for £59

The Console Centre sold more hardware than expected and the Portfolio club sold out around 3pm in Birmingham

Merlin have teamed up with Libris Internet Services to offer Atariphiles a cosy way onto the Internet from 36p a day The deal includes pre-configured atari Software (PC/Mac support also available) along with Atari support during office hours

It was good to see Sunrise Electronics offer something to treat seasoned musicians and newcomers to the delights of using Atari hardware and provide some background music

Flying in from the states Brad Koda of Best Electronics performed his usual trick of turning his tardis suitcase into a stand full of weird and wunnerful accessories everyone would buy if only they knew what half of them did!

And finally after returning to Atari Computing towers we're left pondering how best to promote the magazine for the benefit of all the dedicated people still actively enjoying the Atari scene thanks for your support ◆

Papyrus Gold 4.0

Finally the English release of this acclaimed word processor reaches these shores. Denesh Bhabuta wonders if the wait was worthwhile...

On the PC platform there s Microsoft Word - probably the best known word processor in the universe It gets updated with new features and numerous bug fixes at an alarming rate However I hardly ever use or need the new features it needs acres of hard disk space and runs at a snails pace on all but the fastest PCs

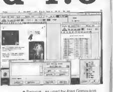
Currently the only commercial competitor still under development on our favourite platform is Protext and the two programs couldn t be more different! Protext is a fast full-featured word processor which grudgingly allows GEM to get a foot in the door In contrast Papyrus embraces all the latest GEM enhancements and offers WYSIWYG word processing combined with features traditionally the preserve of DTP packages Papyrus bears more than a passing resemblance to Word but is more streamlined and capable of running on the modest systems most Atari enthusiasts use

Papyrus is perfectly capable of creating professional quality documents such as flyers brochures manuals and even pages for Atari Computing! It s packed with features I actually have a use for yet remains easy to use an admirable achievement

This update comes two years after the last release and Papyrus will have to work hard to regain lost friends let s take a tour round the new features

Font freaks should enjoy the Unicode support when used together with NVDI 4 Unicode allows to characters above the usual Atari 255 character restriction all the way up to 65535 characters (16 bit) The previous 240 font limit has also been removed

The most visible change (to anyone running colour resolutions) is the user interface which is now fully 3D More usefully nearly all the buttons in dialogues can be selected via keyboard shortcuts and most of the main dialogs are non-modal - which means they can be left open on the desktop for convenient access



▲Papyrus as used by Atari Computing and Scotland s TOS Atari Group (STAG) newsletter!

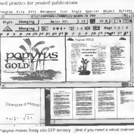
Cosmetic changes include real time sliders in listboxes pop-up menus with cycle buttons and iconification

The toolbar has been re-arranged and the ruler section extended to include a font selector text size text style zoom, page view and mouse mode options The ruler has been moved below the icons and tabs are now drawn directly in the ruler Moving these frequently used features to the toolbar has certainly improved productivity

Text style tags can now be set separately from paragraph tags although a paragraph tag can still be linked to a text style tag Sensibly paragraph tags from older versions of Papyrus are automatically linked to text styles with the same name

Image support has been dramatically enhanced Using HiSoft's own modular External File Management System (EFMS) it s possible to import and display colour images in most popular formats In addition to the Atari GEM Metafile and IMG formats there s support for cross platform formats including GIF JPEG PhotoCD and many others This is

Multiple pages can now be displayed side by side the number of pages is user definable If 2 is entered a blank page page is displayed on the top left hand side because odd page numbers always appear on the right hand side standard practice for printed publications


Papyrus File Edit Document Font Style Special Object Options
Style Shonging Swiss 221 12 25 %
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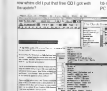
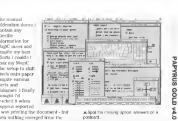
GOLD
Papyrus GOLD
Examples of microsc

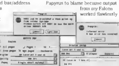
▲Papyrus moves firmly into DTP territory deal if you need a visual overview of your document great news to everyone tired of using third party utilities to convert images from different sources into monochrome images Text import remains unchanged with support for ASCII Rich Text Format (RTF) 1st WordPlus and Signum New colour printing routines and drivers support the latest crop of colour printers with colour print to image support A few long standing irritants have been relieved Wrap around works better for both text and images Previously importing an image larger than the page caused new pages to be inserted indefinitely Wrap around now ignores objects larger than the main text frame in both dimensions and they can be resized once imported Aborting documents during printing works more reliably using the [Esc] key and the dreaded bus/address error catcher seems much improved

Papyrus v4 is not currently available separately so you have to buy Papyrus v3 and the update disk Not ideal but happily after installing v3 it s easy to install the update over the top simply copy a single self extracting file from the update disk into the Papyrus folder and double click. In addition to the double-sided update disk the upgrade pack includes an A5 format 20 page manual addendum and free CD containing 500 Bitstream Postscript and Type 1 fonts No Speedo fonts are included which is a bit strange considering the Speedo font format is owned by Bitstream.


▼65535 characters in at least 240 fonts now where did I put that free CD I got with the update?

The manual addendum doesn t contain any specific information for MagiC users and despite my best efforts I couldn t coax my MagiC Mac setup to shift pixels onto paper despite various alerts and dialogues I finally thought I'd cracked it when Papyrus reported it was printing the document - but then nothing emerged from the printer Maybe MagiC Mac 2 fixes this problem In the meantime I can t hold Papyrus to blame because output from my Falcon worked flawlessly


▲Spot the missing option answers on a postcard


▲[Sings] And I still haven t found what I'm looking for

There is however one problem I do hold Papyrus responsible for Opening any ASCII file causes an internal bus error rendering the working environment unstable the work around being to create a new document and import the file

Papyrus takes a considerable time to open up much like Word on the PC I understand the program is packed so if you have plenty of hard disk space you could try unpacking it using one of the various depackers available from PD/Shareware libraries and on line services

All these updates certainly don't seem to add up to two years development so why has it taken so long? Apparently the entire program has been re written in portable code with OS/2 Windows NT and Mac versions planned I was amused to hear a rumour the OS/2 development version has the same bugs as the Atari version!

My last whinge is a collective cry of anguish on behalf of all writers using Papyrus to submit copy to Atari Computing We ve waited two years for an update and there's still no word count function! (I ll second that emotion allegedly word count is in the next update - Ed) In the meantime I ll continue exporting RTF or ASCII format into Marcel just to get a word count

Looking on the bright side Papyrus development is continuing and it really is in a class of its own as the only commercial GEM based document word processor ◆

Publisher
HiSoft Systems
Tel 01505-718718
E-mail support@hisoft co uk
WWW www hisoft co uk
Papyrus 3 £85 00, Papyrus 4 Update. £39 95 (£37.95 for HiSoft Silver/Gold customers) Update price includes Bitstream 500 Font CD

Requirements
All Ataris 2Mb memory minimum, ST high resolution and higher

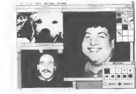
Pros
Colour image and output support enhanced productivity features

Cons
No word count!

Positive Image

After a year's worth of hype and publicity, it finally arrives. Frank Charlton investigates Positive Image...

Positive Image is described as a 24-bit image processing and retouching program for all Atari computers It is an attempt to bring the power of heavyweight applications like the industry standard Adobe Photoshop available on the PC and Mac platforms, to the Atari line without the hefty price tag A brave ambition which to a large extent has succeeded as we ll see...



▲Positive Image is cleanly written and behaves well under all versions of TOS and GEM

After the painless registration process which personalises your copy of PI you have a working copy PI comes in two basic flavours - one for standard STs fitted with a 68000 CPU and one optimised for the Falcon and TT which takes advantage of the more powerful 68030 processor and the DSP functions in Falcon machines

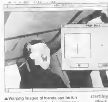
One of the first questions that springs to mind is how is it possible to carry out complex image processing on a humble 16-colour screen display? PI provides a practical solution to this problem When loading an image which contains more colours than available PI works with two versions of the image The first is dithered to fit the number of colours available, and displayed on-screen The second copy is held internally in memory and retains the full colour depth of the original So while the on-screen image is displayed in 16 colours any changes made are applied to the full version so keeping the full colour information intact PI runs from monochrome ST high resolution up to the Falcon s 15-bit TrueColor' and beyond. If you have a graphics card PI attempts to auto-detect and take advantage of it too

While this fidelity to the colour depth of an image is admirable there are some restrictions Although PI runs in mono modes tweaking complex 24-bit images on a dithered mono display isn t particularly easy to do unless you can actually visualise what s happening Still the fact that PI isn t restricted to high-colour resolutions is an admirable aim.

PI is fully GEM-compliant and opens any images in a standard window It seems cleanly written too, since it runs well under multitasking systems like Geneva, MagiC and MultiTOS It also performs admirably under emulators like Gemulator and MagiCMac The interface is sensibly designed with tools and functions accessed through icon toolboxes as well as the menu bar The toolboxes are excellent with clear icons It s apparent a fair amount of thought has gone into creating a clean and uncluttered interface which still lets you get at the power tucked away inside PI

Once working with an image PI has a lot in common with other high-end image processors For global work on entire images or selected blocks there s a comprehensive range of filters covering everything from the standard Sharpen and Smooth through to more esoteric types like high-pass filters Some filters are purely for special effects such as one which makes images appear to be vibrating rapidly On a Falcon some of the filters are accelerated via the DSP which produces noticeably faster results Like any good image processor you can construct your own filters - or modify existing ones and save them to disk for future use If you ve used other top-end image processing packages you should be knocking up you own filters in no time

PI also offers tools to distort and warp your images As well as standard rotate and resize tools you can twist an image or block using the object and control point warp tools While they re nowhere near as sophisticated as their counterparts in APEX Media striking results are possible A first for PI is the ability to create those pseudo-3D stereograms which caught everyone s imagination a while back PI can create random-dot stereograms for you although you need to prepare an image specifically for the job The 3D depth information is built up according to the colour of each pixel in your image - colour 0 in the palette is deemed to be furthest away from the eye with each subsequent shade rendered closer in 3D space With a bit of practice you can create stereograms which possess a startling amount of depth



▲Warping images of friends can be fun but don t expect anything too artistic as a result

Block handling is extremely powerful indeed As well as being able to select the standard square and elliptical blocks PI offers two advanced modes for selection - autotracing and Bezier curves Autotracing often called a magic wand will select any solid areas of colour you click on. Setting a tolerance factor allows a looser selection selecting a white pixel in a background also selects any neighbouring shades of cream or grey while leaving darker shades unselected

When it comes to selecting complex objects - for a job such as lifting a person from some complex background scenery a much more powerful tool is required PI lets you outline a complex object by drawing a series of intricate curves around the edges which is converted to a selected block Initially you can draw the curves fairly loosely and drag the control points later to smooth and fine-tune the outline It does takes practice to use Beziers effectively but once you crack the technique it s a doddle to do

PI uses the GEM clipboard intelligently Every block you cut is saved to the clipboard and can be recalled and pasted at any time - even weeks or months later as long as the clipboard files are left intact This is superb and makes for trouble-free cutting and pasting even if you suddenly need to switch off or nip into another application

With a package as powerful and complex as this you d expect a steep learning curve right? Not so The 130 page A5 manual is very well written, and explains topics logically and clearly In some aspects it s almost a tutorial work on image processing and the extensive glossary of graphical terms will help novice digital artists get to grips with the program As with most image processing software experimentation is the key to learning Thanks to the helpful manual you fiddle with images and pick up new techniques as you go

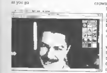
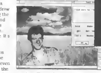

▲As you can see PI runs happily on a mono monitor even editing 24-bit TrueColor images

Image file format support is exhaustive The standard Atari formats of old like Degas and NeoChrome are supported as are the more generic multi-platform formats like TIFF and JPEG One glaring omission is the lack of support for CompuServe s GIF format - an image type used every day by web designers The reason is simple – some time ago UniSys proved they owned the LZW compression system around which GIF images are based Basically every program which uses the GIF format is now required to pay a license fee to UniSys for the privilege Floppyshop decided they weren t happy about this and so GIF support was axed From the users point of view this means you ll need external conversion utilities to work with GIF pics However there is hope because PI uses external load and save modules so the GIF module could easily be re-introduced later if Floppyshop wise up

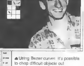
▼With a little practice unusual collage images are easy to do



Once you re happy with an image you ll often want a printout PI s printer support is both comprehensive and high quality As well as a range of custom drivers for mono and colour printers like HP s DeskJet series printing via GDOS is also supported Any printer driver can also be redirected to a disk file for later printing The jewel in the crown here is the inclusion of a PostScript driver while you probably don t own a professional PostScript printer the ability to dump the file to disk at maximum quality for output via a Bureau is useful

Positive Image is powerful well written and damn good at the job It s not without faults though - as well as the lack of GIF support there are other niggles JPEG images can only be compressed with two default settings 50% and 75% - which is less than flexible PI can be awfully lethargic at some tasks too Some filters take forever on large images even using the Falcon s DSP and screen redraws can crawl along in TrueColor mode MagiC 5 users will also be annoyed to discover PI quibbles files which use lower case letters for file extensions for example img instead of IMG by saying it doesn t support that file type Hopefully this will be corrected in the next update

So does PI compare favourably to the big boys on the Mac and PC? It does yes It provides a vast amount of image processing power at a fraction of the price users on other platforms have to cough up and it s well behaved and stable The modular system means new file formats can be added later without fuss PI is still actively developed - indeed a specific 68040 version is now available from Floppyshop for users of Falcon expansions like the AfterBurner040 At this price point PI is an excellent program if you re serious about processing scanned or digitised images it s a boon ◆


▲Using Bezier curves it's possible to chop difficult objects out completely from the background

Publisher
Floppyshop
Tel 01224 586208
RRP· £79
launch price £65 + P&P

Requirements
Any Atari with 1MB more memory and hard drive recommended

Pros
Very powerful works in all resolutions excellent manual

Cons
No GIF support can be slow

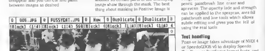
Let's see what Chris Good has to say about

SECOND OPINION

Positive Image

A selection of filters in action...

Positive Image comes in a nicely presented video style case containing the two Master disks 134 page A5 ring bound manual and registration card Positive image is not is an art package in the traditional sense of the word in fact if you want to create illustrations from scratch you're probably better off using a traditional paint package Positive Image does include drawing tools but it's primarily designed to edit and retouch photographic images This is achieved through the use of masks filters warping and retouching tools If you've tried cutting and pasting colour images between palette based art packages you're bound to have run into colour palette problems Positive Image avoids this by working internally at 24-bit (16.7 million colours) irrespective of the actual screen depth so palette problems disappear and you can cut and paste between images as desired



Scaling, pasting and blocks

The cat and dog sequence use a combination of scaling and pasting between images The cat was cut from the original image using the Bezier block tool which cuts around irregular shapes then pasted onto the original dog image This block was then scaled down to a quarter of its original size and placed next to the dog

A nifty Trace tool can automatically select similarly coloured areas within images which makes it easy to select to lift foreground areas from distracting backgrounds

There are 11 different ways to 'Overlay a block onto an image you can even choose how each colour channel (RGB) and mask affects the block Everything is controlled from a dialog box which appears after the block has been dragged into position within an image.

Blocks cut or copied from images are saved to the Clipboard to a numbered list Each block is saved with the name of the image you've cut it from. For example 1 CAT.JPG, 2 CAT.JPG 3 DOG.JPG 4 CAT.JPG and so on. It's difficult to remember what each block contains without making notes which is bad enough but if you delete a block then save another one it is inserted in the first available slot in the list which is most confusing

Masks

Masking involves placing one image over another so certain parts of the underlying image show through the mask. The best thing about masking in Positive Image is the ability to preview the result without altering the image ideal for beginners Masks can be applied to the entire image or a marked block Masks are saved in the in upcoming PNG (Portable Network Graphic) format which is the replacement for the popular GIF format which ran into legal wrangles

Filters

Filters are applied to images using the Toolbar There's a selection of standard filters including smooth sharpen and blur along with options to load and save filters. There's even a filter editor but this is definitely one for experienced pixel pushers! Filters can be applied to the entire image or a marked block The Falcon's DSP chip is used but filtering is processor intensive so expect lengthy delays

Warping

Compared to the equivalent feature in Apex Media this is a basic implementation Only one image can be warped which means morphing between images isn't possible and instead of dragging control points the image is warped via arrow buttons It's all rather hit and miss but as with most Positive Image functions you can undo your handy work if you don't like the results

Retouching

All the standard retouching tools are available including blur/sharpen dodge burn rubber stamp area fill pencil paintbrush line erase and spraycan The opacity fade and strength can be applied to the spraycan, area fill paintbrush and line tools which allows subtle editing and gives you the feel of using the real tools

Text handling

Positive Image takes advantage of NVDI 4 or SpeedoGDOS v5 to display Speedo TrueType or PostScript format fonts and all the usual text effects (bold light outline italic and shadow) can be applied.

Overall compared to the competition and with continued development I'd say Positive Image is a real bargain ●

Publisher
Floppyshop
Tel +(0)1224 586208
RRP: £79,
launch price £65 + P&P

Requirements
All Ataris 1Mb memory minimum

Pros
Bargain price DSP support compatible

Cons
Slow screen redraws compounded by no interruptible redraw no GIF support odd clipboard function

System Solutions

Communications

Comms Software	
CoNnect v2 46	£29 95
Modems (Fax compatible)	
14 4K baud XLink	£79 00
33 6K baud XLink	£139 00
Straight Fax v2 50	£59 95

CD-ROM Systems

4X Speed Falcon System	
Toshiba Drive SCSI II Cable	£239 00
10X Speed Falcon System	
Pioneer Drive SCSI II Cable	£299 00

above systems include ExtenDOS Pro v2 4 and a free Mega Archive Volume 1 CD

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Whiteline Transmission	£15 00
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Render a 3D scene with Raystart 3
ST 230 mins Falcon 72 mins
TT 40 mins Medusa T40 10 mins
Hades 060 5 mins

Load a vector object with Calamus SL
ST 59 secs Falcon 28 secs
TT 20 secs Medusa T40 4 secs
Hades 060 3 secs

Load a vector object in Calamus SL PC
P 133 29 secs **Hades 060 13 secs**

Calculate a POV Raytracer scene
TT 24 hours **Hades 060 16 mins**

Rotate an image with StudioPhoto
Falcon 9 mins TT 4 mins
Hades 060 10 secs

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NVDI 4 11	£49 95
100 Font Pack 1 or 2	£39 95
500 Font Pack CD	£49 95

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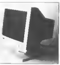
The SM14 High Resolution mono monitor replaces the Atari SM124/5 The 14" FST display has a crisp sharp image A Tilt & Swivel stand is included and it is a plug in and go unit with no adapters required!

"Essential Buy 90%"
ST Review May 95

SM14	(without audio)	£129 95
SM14s	(with audio)	£149 95

See Cubase Special offer for bundle discount



MiniS II & EZ Flyer Hard Drive Systems

The MiniS II Hard Drive Systems can have drive capacities up to 4 3Gb This full SCSI system is hardware compatible with all Atari computers Mac s & PC s They are unrivalled in size noise speed, and style and come with a thru port for expansion The On/Off switch is now located at the front
The SyQuest EZ230 Flyer drive is the successor to the highly popular EZ 135 drive. Perfect as a first hard drive or as a backup system to larger drives SyQuest have made this drive even smaller measuring a tiny 5 5"x7 3"x1 3"

NEW! [illegible]

	[illegible]	[illegible]
SyQuest EZ 230Mb	£279	£349
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EZ 230 Cart (5 Pack)	£99 00	
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540Mb MiniS II	£199	£249
SyJet 1Gb line Cart	£479	
2Gb D20 MiniS II	£499	

ST and TT [illegible]

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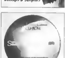
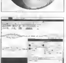


ZERO X - Digital Sound Processing

ZERO X is exciting news for anyone using a sampler sample player or hard disk recording system It uses advanced techniques to analyse and alter your samples in a huge number of ways all with the minimum of human intervention
ZERO X will automatically create smooth loops with gate and XFade transformations for samples that normally wouldn't loop With the click of a button it will rip out a drum track from a sample and create a MIDI file enabling you to time stretch almost any drum track to fit your needs It will let you edit convert and upload samples to a wide range of samplers. ZERO X runs on any Atari from an ST to a Falcon It s the software you need for all your sampling requirements Try it before you buy ask for the Demo Disk

ZERO X Software	£169 00



MagiC PC and NVDI 4 PC

Do you have a PC? Are you thinking/being forced to buy one? If so take a look at the new MagiC PC This amazing software will allow most Atari ST software to run on any PC with at least 8Mb of RAM and Windows 95/NT although a Pentium processor is recommended for speed We use Papyrus Twist DAs Layout TC and DA's Picture all on a Pentium 100 MagiC PC will take advantage of your PC s real RAM virtual RAM hard drives CD ROM and printer Even special mice and digitising tablets can be used

NVDI 4 PC will enhance MagiC PC to give much faster screen redraws and the unique ability to create any screen resolution for MagiC PC from 256 to a stunning 16 million colours switchable at any time Make full use of Windows Truetype fonts for your SpeedoGDOS compatible programs Note. Cubase and Notator will not run under MagiC PC. Please call for a demo disk

MagiC PC including EASE 5	£149 00
NVDI 4 PC	£69 95
MagiC PC EASE 5 + NVDI 4 PC	£195 00

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Lottery Companion

Forget Mystic Meg! Colin Monro trades in his crystal ball in exchange for this sophisticated number cruncher...

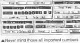
Why would anyone need a computer program to select six numbers between 1 and 49? There are already dozens of lottery programs swilling around the PD libraries and on-line services Unfortunately many of them are one off efforts or designed for US state lotteries Lottery Companion 4 (LC4) is specifically designed for the UK National Lottery contains a wealth of features and is actively developed by Mark Butler Support even includes a results service for registered users

As a shareware program LC4 is completely functional apart from a couple of esoteric features You will however be bombarded by "Hey you – register!" reminders from time to time – which can best be described as typing exercises from hell! With registration from five pounds it's less painful to reach for your cheque book and pay up if only for your sanity

Registered owners get a superb printed version of the A4 manual and I found this infinitely more comfortable than trawling through the 140Kb disk based manual Every aspect of playing the lottery is covered in detail all in a sensible and highly informative manner - which helps maths drop-outs like myself get to grips with all the features

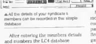
LC4 works on several levels At the simplest LC4 offers a no fuss random number selection from the minimum of parameters Generating the random numbers is the easy bit - many pocket calculators offer this as a built-in function but LC4 offers features aimed at lottery syndicates and serious players

Factors such as roll over weeks, the names of the Camelot machine used for each draw and the ball set used can all be taken into account and the number sets can be sorted into numerical order at blistering speed



▲Never mind those all important numbers there's a mind boggling set of factors you can record with each week's draw

At the Stephen Hawking end of the scale LC4 numbers can be selected with a variable bias towards the most frequently occurring numbers and it's even possible to ask which is the most likely number to be picked based on past results 28 at the time of writing

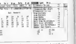


▲All the details of your syndicate's members can be recorded in this simple database

After entering the members details and numbers the LC4 database features provide the ideal way for syndicates to keep track of who's won what who didn't and why! If the planned additional mid week draws go ahead LC4 already has an option to cover this

It's important to log ALL the lottery results since Week 1 but don't panic! The author maintains a list of all the draws which registered owners can receive either by post or email It's also possible to phone Camelot and get the results of previous draws

LC4 is programmed in GFA Basic and assembler which does tend to be a bit rough round the edges except when used with third party add-ons There are no graphics or fancy fonts just plain text and the occasional beep or buzz If you do win the jackpot you'll be rewarded by a nasty tune probably the last thing you'll hear before you faint! LC4 feels a bit like a TOS program with one fixed GEM style window but is fast and efficient in use. Simply enter the numbers drawn on the night and LC4 analyses them against your chosen sets of numbers however many there are, and informs you there and then if you've won anything LC4 worked flawlessly on a 1988 STFM in ST medium and high resolution and on a Falcon with ScreenBlaster 2 but doesn't get along with MagiC the popular multitasking OS The screen display gets jumbled-up the fixed GEM window becomes a real pain and all the available memory is gobbled up The author is aware of these problems and plans to implement MagiC compatibility along with an enhanced interface



▲The drawn numbers can be analysed in a huge range of ways

Maybe in the future plug-in modules to support other lotteries could be added The Irish Lottery in particular is becoming popular in Britain because it's possible to gamble on individual numbers through bookmakers

I've trashed plenty of other lottery programs but Lottery Companion is different – I get the distinct feeling my bank balance is in for a treat Remember the jackpot is out there – somewhere! ◆

Author
Mark Butler
8 Brookside Hinckley, LE10 2TL
Email mark@dwell demon co uk
URL http://www dwell demon co uk
£12.00 with printed manual,
£7.00 on-disk manual only

Pros
Fast/feature packed/easy to use/under active development

Cons
Memory hog/incompatible with MagiC

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ST Format - 91%

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Thought! is a deceptively powerful program that has, quite literally, hundreds of uses and applications. Special features include drag and drop, clipboard, Macro creation, and many more innovative features

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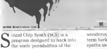
Synth something simple

Colin Munro takes time out from direct-to-disk digital audio, MIDI sequencing and synthesiser programming to investigate Sound Chip Synth...



Sound Chip Synth (SCS) is a program designed to hack into the sonic possibilities of the Yamaha YM-2149 programmable sound generator chip built into all Atari computers SCS offers a quick and easy way to create sounds without programming and pushes the chip to its limits

Supplied on a single disk in a neat CD-style case SCS works on all Ataris with 512Kb memory or above (1Mb on the Falcon) Resolutions of at least 640x400 (ST high) and maths co-processors are supported where fitted Most of the activity takes place from the comprehensive front panel window - which duplicates most of the functions tucked away in menus This implies SGS is happy under a multi tasking environment but sadly this version doesn t work under MagiC the author blames the lack of MagiC programming documentation

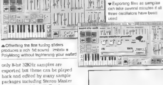
Anyone familiar with the jargon and theory needed to create electronic sounds will understand the finer points of the options available For the rest of us these controls reminiscent of old analogue synthesisers are crying out to be tweaked and twiddled so let's have a play!

Simple sounds can be created quickly More complex sweeping sounds like the Seashore patch (included on the Reader disk) requires a little experimentation with the envelope sliders These shape the sound waves volume and timing to come away with something realistic

The Yamaha YM-2149 programmable sound chip has three independent tone generators a noise generator and a mixer for noise and tone Each tone generator can produce a sound from 30Hz (barely audible) up to 125KHz (way above the human audible hearing range) It also moonlights by controlling the Atari s parallel

In case you're wondering patch is a synthesiser term harking back to the days when synths used real leads to 'patch' the various modules together

Native SYN format patch files can be exported as Atari AVR format samples or as RAW data Currently only 8-bit 32KHz samples are exported but these can be played back and edited by many sample packages including Stereo Master Replay 16 and Zero-X Tracker programs can also utilise these samples which makes SCS an attractive option for programmers looking to integrate sound samples into their programs I m imagining a nice bass-rich three-channel burble in a progress bar to signify the end of a task!



▲Offsetting the fine tuning sliders produces a rich fat sound imitate a PolyMoog without frightening your wallet!

▼Exporting files as samples can take several minutes if all three oscillators have been used

Perhaps if a later upgrade of SCS could create source code from patches to add directly into programs it would become a real labour-saving device Future developments already planned include MIDI sample dump support more export waveform and formatting options graphic envelope displays and a pitch envelope controller PC and Mac versions are also planned but for once it's nice to see our favourite platform leading the field!

SCS is an attractively-designed easy-to-use program which appears to be a solution looking for a problem Bearing in mind the modest abilities of the Yamaha sound chip compared with the sound sources available to even Atari owners of modest means it will never be viewed as a serious sound creation tool however the program excels at what it does and the results speak for themselves ◆

Three sounds created during the course of this review have been included on the Reader Disk BUZSWEEP, LEAD1 and SEASHORE are provided as both SYN files to use in Sound Chip Synth and as AVR samples so you can play them in other programs

Available from
Electronic Cow 350 Broadwater Crescent Stevenage Herts SG2 8EZ
£10 plus £1 50 post and packing Make cheques/money orders payable to "Electronic Cow".

Requirements
Any ST or Falcon 640 x 400 resolution or better needed maths co-processors supported

Pros
Attractive interface/Easy to use/Sample export quality good

Cons
Not MagiC compatible/Lack of ST medium resolution support

On the NeST

The Atari Network

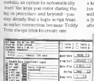
Worried about runaway phone bills? Harry Sideras reveals the tricks of the trade to keep costs to the minimum...

Pioneers of the on-line community used to message on-line in real time and newcomers would often sink without trace after their phone bill arrived The first step to reducing on-line costs was the formation of networks to bulk transfer messages between BBSs using cheap rate in the middle of the night This means you can dial a BBS in your local call area and read messages from all over the world. The second step was the introduction of off-line readers which packs and downloads your pre-selected message areas for you to read and reply to off-line. Combined with the reductions in call charges and the low cost of faster modems the threat of a large phone bill recedes - but every little extra saving helps eh?

In issue one we explained how to use off-line readers to save time After you become a regular caller to any BBS it's worth asking the Sysop if there's an option to pack your messages after you log off which saves the time wasted on-line while you wait as your messages are packed After a few connections you'll be thinking it should be possible to automate other parts of the process and you'd be right!

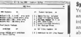
Reasons to be cheerful (part 1)

Teddy Term's Dial Directory dialog contains an option to automatically learn the keys you enter during the log on procedure and beyond you may already find a login script from an earlier connection because Teddy Term always tries to create one



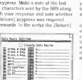
Log on grab your messages log off using a script!

Selecting Edit within the Dial Directory dialog displays several entries in the bottom corner, containing the last text sent from the BBS and the response made Typically this ends after your name and password has been entered despite further script entries being available - this is a limitation in Teddy Term that didn't get fixed before development ceased To extend scripts you need to investigate the events which occur on-line and enter the script responses manually in the correct sequence



Retrace your steps to fine tune your logon script

To do this view your most recent capture buffer within the Terminal by selecting the Options pop-up menu or by pressing [Alternate]+v Make sure you are viewing the unstripped buffer with all the VT52 control codes sent by the BBS still intact Locate each point where you had to respond with a keypress Make a note of the last ten characters sent by the BBS along with your response and note whether a [Return] keypress was required afterwards In the script the [Return] key is represented by a vertical line character as shown in the screenshot Due to the limited number of scripted responses available in Teddy Term you can create several Dial entries for one BBS to perform different on-line tasks For example you could set up a script to download new messages without uploading a reply packet another to upload your replies without collecting new messages and maybe one to do both which ends without logging off so you can stay on-line and visit other areas of the BBS



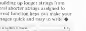
Planning can cope with interruptions to your carefully laid plans

System-wide macros

You may encounter important announcements from Sysops which interrupt your script The announcements could contain details about new features on the board or periods of unavailability but could contain anything Most Sysops are aware such announcements disrupt scripts and usually end with a consistent trailing message such as "Press any Key

Messages of this type which require no action beyond a random keypress to acknowledge their presence, can be catered for using the Auto Macro settings of your terminal available from the pop-up in Teddy Term's main terminal screen. So long as you cover all possible variations and trailing dots they can be absorbed by your logon scripts without causing them to stall

If you do have to write messages on-line Teddy Term's ability to assign text strings to function keys saves time and hassle Prior planning by building up longer strings from several shorter strings assigned to different function keys can make your messages quick and easy to write ◆

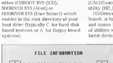


Send standard messages at the touch of a key

Thanks for the memory!

Howard Carson concludes his hard disk primer with an overview of hard disk driver software...

The three most popular hard disk drivers are made by ICD Inc Atari and Uwe Seimet The driver itself is a small SYS file called either ICDBOOT SYS (ICD), SHDRIVER SYS (Atari) or HDDRIVER SYS (Uwe Seimet) which resides in the root directory of your boot drive (typically C for hard disk based systems or A for floppy based systems)



C:\AUTO\CACHE014.PRX

Name: CACHE014.PRX

Size: 1051 bytes

Date: 23/08/96

Time: 10:48

Number of Folders: _____

Number of Files: _____

Attribute: Read/Write

▲CACHEnnn program Simply rename it to set an equal number of FAT and data buffers

The ICD driver software although not 100% AHDI compatible is very popular and comes in three flavours The commercial PRO level which installs on all models with or without an ICD host adapter in the system CD-ROM Floptical and other SCSI devices are supported A copy of the Cleanup ST utility is included to help diagnose and repair disk problems The LINK level as shipped with the ICD Link SCSI/ASCI host adapter This level also supports Floptical and CD-ROM drives - Freeware level downloadable from on-line services and available from PD/Shareware libraries This level includes enough utilities to get most hard drives up and running Cache software is included although on systems without an ICD host adaptor caching is disabled CD-ROM and Floptical devices are not supported

The Atari driver called Atari Hard Disk Interface (AHDI) is Freeware and includes utilities to format, partition and boot most drives Other Atari Freeware utilities are available separately including a software cache (CACHEnnn PRG) and configuration utility (HD_PATCH PRG)

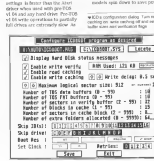
HD-Driver the leading light of the bunch is fully AHDI/XHDI compatible and comes bundled with a full suite of utilities which supports for the latest devices and multitasking operating systems HD-Driver provides the most flexible configuration options overall and is still under active development

Benchmarking

The relative performance of driver software defies accurate benchmarking but can be usefully defined in general terms

- The ICD driver with optimal cache settings is faster than the Atari driver when used with pre-TOS v1 04 and any hard drive Pre-TOS v1 04 write operations to partially full drives are extremely slow As the drive fills up writes slow down considerably The Auto folder program FATSPEED replaces the slow Atari TOS code to solve this problem A TOS upgrade to at least TOS v1 04 is recommended although for around the same outlay a copy of MagiC might be a better investment MagiC includes fast efficient drive handling code along with the benefits of pre-emptive multitasking and many other features
- The Atari driver with optimal cache settings used with TOS v3 06 or later (typically TTs and Falcons) is not as fast as the ICD software when using the older Megafile and SCSI I drives SHDRIVER.SYS is however very reliable and more compatible than ICDBOOT SYS
- HD-Driver with optimal TOS/FAT buffers is faster than both the ICD and Atari drivers In addition HD-Driver supports the newer SCSI II and III standards which demand SCSI bus arbitration and regular polling queries to prevent drives spinning down Many newer drive models spin down to save power

▼ICD s configuration dialog Turn read caching on write caching off and set the buffer sizes and verification flags



A:\AUTO\ICDBOOT.PRG

C:\ICDBOOT.SYS

☑ Display Hard Disk status messages

☑ Enable write verify

☑ Enable read caching

☑ Enable write caching

RAM Used: 121 KB

Write delay: 0.5 sec

Maximum logical sector size: 512 In system: 2048

```
Number of TOS data buffers (0 - 99)              : 10
Number of TOS FAT buffers (0 - 99)               : 10
Number of sectors in verify buffer (2 - 99)      : 32
Number of blocks in cache (1 - 99)               : 15
Number of sectors in cache block (2 - 999)       : 8__
Number of extra folders allocated (0 - 9999): 64__
```

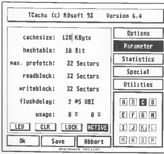
Skip ID(s): 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

Skip drive: C D E F G H I J K L M N O P

Boot Res : ST FALCON ✓ SKIP

Set Clock :

Retries: 0 1 2 3 4


TCache (c) RDsoft 93 Version 6.4

cachesize: 128 KByte
hashtable: 10 Bit
max. prefetch: 32 Sectors
readblock: 32 Sectors
writeblock: 32 Sectors
flushdelay: 2 *5 UBI
usage: 0 % 0 %

▲Before trying TCACHE make sure you disable all other software caching

which can cause mayhem with TOS Mint, Geneva and MagiC

- The ICD driver does not offer any speed advantages over AHDI when used with TOS v3 06 or later and the newer SCSI II drives In this situation both drivers and their corresponding software caches provide less notable benefits due to the presence of high speed cache/buffers on-board the hard drive controller Try reducing your software cache to around 1/32 of available memory and see if you can detect any slowdown in system performance
- Always use CACHEnnn.PRG with AHDI Always use ICD s built-in caching when using the ICD driver Always use HD-Driver s built-in facilities

Software caching

Some TOS versions require larger sector sizes when formatting the BGM format partitions required to access larger SCSI drives and these will create larger caches In general the larger the sector size the larger the resulting cache For example CACHEnnn renamed to CACHE010 PRG provides 10 FAT buffers and 10 TOS buffers The total cache size with small 512 byte sectors occupies just over 10Kb of memory The same setting for 4096 byte sectors takes over 80Kb memory and with 16Kb sectors a whooping 320Kb of memory is gobbled up! To determine the ideal sized software cache proceed as follows

Step 1

Create a temporary folder Make sure your software cache is enabled - reboot to make sure where necessary For the Atari driver rename CACHEnnn PRG to CACHE010.PRG to set up a small cache If you're using HD-Driver or ICD drivers use the defaults Carefully time and make a note of how long it takes to copy 200 files and nested folders to the temporary folder and then how long it takes to delete them

Step 2

Disable your software cache reboot and repeat the same test using the exact same files and folders

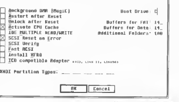
If the time for step 1 is faster your software cache is having a beneficial effect Increase the size of the cache by 25% reboot, and repeat the tests If you get faster results increase the cache size by another 25% and try again. Repeat this process until there is either no speed improvement or you have used more than one eighth of available memory at which point you have determined the optimum software cache size for your system Be sure to use exactly the same files and folders for all tests!

If the time for steps 1 and 2 is the same the memory used by your software cache is wasted or completely inadequate This situation is most likely to occur when your system is booting one of the newer faster hard drives with their own on-board caches and adaptive segmented buffers

It is important to remember the optimal cache size determined by these tests does not provide the fastest data access/retrieval times in all situations - every cache set-up is a compromise

If you fancy experimenting take a look the shareware utility TCACHE which offers total control over system read/write efficiency on a par with the most advanced OS/2 or Windows 95/NT utilities Always read the documentation carefully and back up your data before testing have fun!◆

▼HD Driver's configuration options the cache settings are on the right hand side


General Options

☐ Background DMA (MagiC)
☐ Restart after Reset
☐ Unlock after Reset
☒ Activate CPU Cache
☐ IDE MULTIPLE READ/WRITE
☒ SCSI Reset on Error
☐ SCSI Verify
☐ Fast ACSI
☐ Install XFRB
☐ ICD compatible Adapter (ICD, LINK II, LINK96)

Boot Drive: C
Buffers for FAT: 14_
Buffers for Data: 14_
Additional Folders: 100

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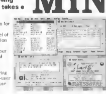
MiNTro!

What is MINT, what does it do and am I missing out? Mark Wherry takes a fresh look...

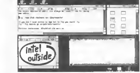
MiNT is an acronym for Mint is Not TOS which adds a level of UNIX (UNiplexed Information and Computing Service UNICS) compatibility to your system UNIX is a powerful operating system which became established on mainframe computers during the seventies It is a multi-user system ideally suited for use in any large organisation Educational and research establishments took the lead which helped UNIX become established as the operating system of choice for the vast majority of Internet servers Originally like DOS (Disk operating System) UNIX was a text based user interface but nowadays with GUIs (Graphical User Interfaces) being so popular UNIX has its own GUI called X Windows MINT is not the only UNIX implementation for Atari computers there is also Linux and NetBSD Both are ports from other platforms requiring at least a Falcon and maths co-processor to run so they re unlikely to appeal to the vast majority of Atari enthusiasts MINT retains TOS compatibility and can run from a floppy based Atari ST system with 1Mb memory although you won t be able to run many programs Realistically you need a hard disk" based system with 2Mb memory

UNIX is a multitasking operating system and MINT enables multitasking of TTP and TOS programs alongside one GEM application I m sure this will come as a disappointment but don t stop reading just yet! This basic system would allow you to run a MiNT compatible GEM program and be able to use a shell at the same time A shell is an environment for running programs similar to a Desktop except in this case the shell has to be a Command Line interface (CLI) similar to DOS For example you're working away and suddenly need to make some files read-only create a new folder or delete some files Normally under single TOS you would have to stop what you re doing but with MINT you can use the shell to perform these operations and continue working in your GEM application



▲XaAES running Animail an Internet mail STiK client

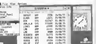
MINT is modular which makes it easy to add extras such as loadable file systems and drivers opening up all sorts of possibilities You can install drivers to support long filenames networks CD-ROM drives and a replacement AES (Application Environment Services), the part of TOS which handles GEM windows icons dialog boxes menus and resource files One example of a replacement AES is Atari s own MultiTOS Atari licensed MINT from the author Eric R Smith so Mint is Not TOS became MiNT is Now TOS! Atari employed Eric to work on TOS development but unfortunately pulled the plug before the project came to fruition You can still buy MultiTOS but there are several better "free" alternatives which offer more potential for the future



▲oAESis running Thing the TCSH shell GEM View and XEDIT

Suck it and see

Let s take a look at how to install MiNT for various requirements, starting from a basic system then adding the extras The current distribution v1 14 consists of three parts the binaries the sources and the documentation This is the standard line up for most MiNT applications A binary file is a ready-to-run executable program whereas source files are program code which has to be compiled and is designed so other programmers can get involved with MiNT development



▼MultiTOS adds active programs to the Desk menu iconification was added just before development stopped

Soft Mint

To install MiNT proceed as follows

- Copy MINTNP PRG to your Auto folder
- Create a folder called MINT on the root of your boot disk/partition
- Copy the file MINT CNF into the MINT folder
- Copy the files TOSWIN.ACC TOSWIN RSC and TOSWIN CNF to the root directory of your boot disk/partition
- Disable any alternative desktops to keep things simple
- Reboot.

Some dramatic changes have taken place at the system level but the desktop does appear boringly familiar so let's try out a few things

- Open the TOSWIN accessory and select the "Open Std Window" option from the File menu.
- Using the file selector select a TOS/TTP program followed by OK.

Selecting a TTP program displays a additional dialog to enter parameters

which is followed by a TOSWIN window displaying the output If this works you can proceed to setup TOSWIN to run a shell such as TCSH BASH or INIT Typically these shells are only supplied with a few built-in commands and you have to build up a collection of MiNT compatible "commands" (TTP programs) in you BIN(ary) folder

Double Mint

If you want "true" multi-tasking you have to add a replacement AES You could add a commercial product such as MultiTOS or N AES but for the ultimate free solution check out the non-commercial AES alternatives oAESis and XaAES (XaAES ain't AES) All these perform the same task but differ both visually and in concept XaAES uses an alternative GEM interface which is a cross between the MacOS and Windows 95 whereas oAESis builds on a traditional 3D look GEM interface with iconification support Both are still under development but at this early stage oAESis seems less ambitious but more compatible with better window management Having said that XaAES looks great!

oAESis installation

oAESis can be run from the desktop or setup to auto boot as follows

- Copy the OAESIS folder on the root directory of your boot drive/partition
- Load the file MINT CNF, into any ASCII text editor NIX purists would probably use EMACS but personally I prefer Everest.
- Look for the line beginning with "INIT=" and change it to "INIT=C:\OAESIS\OAESIS PRG PHYSICAL"
- oAESis will now auto boot but ideally you should configure oAESis to load its own shell such as a Desktop My personal preference is Thing.
- Load the file OAESIS CNF into your text editor
- Change, or add a line, which reads something like "shell C:\THING\THING.APP" where the path and Desktop suit your own system and preferences.
- Reboot and MINT oAESis and your desktop should automatically load in turn You'll arrive at the desktop ready to multi task GEM programs

XaAES installation

This is slightly more complicated

- Copy the XaAES folder with either the colour or mono system into the root directory of your boot drive/partition.
- Copy the mouse device driver MOUSE.XDD into your MINT folder
- Change or add the following lines to read: "CD U:\C\XAAES_M.BIN" "INIT=U:\C\XAAES_M.BIN\XAAES.TOS" (If you are using a colour system substitute "_C" s for "_M" s)
- To load your Desktop change, or add, a line in XAAES CNF to read "run u:\c\thing\thing.app" adjusting the path and Desktop to suit your system

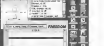
Don t try and install both at the same time and be cautious until you figure out which programs run and which cause problems Do take the time to read the documentation which includes lots of helpful advice and system specific information Do report problems back to the authors - look after your OS programmer! Geneva the commercial replacement multi-tasking OS from Gribnif software offers co-operative multi-tasking However with MINT installed Geneva offers true pre-emptive multi-tasking just like MagiC The benefits of pre-emptive multi-tasking are beyond the scope of this article

LonG, CaSE-sensitivE FIlE.NameS!

Most platforms offer support for case-sensitive long filenames and using MINT so can your Atari The MINT/oAESis combination supports loadable file systems such as Minix which can handle long filenames up to 126 characters Minix requires its own partition or drive because it erases all the existing data Although Minix is pretty reliable you cannot use normal disk editing tools so if you run into problems the only recourse is to FSCK (File system Consistency checKer) included in the Minix distribution Make sure you back-up your data regularly it is good practice anyway MagiC 5 now supports long filenames up to 64 characters via its [vfat] option so I expect to see the number of programs supporting long filenames increasing In the meantime you may have to retire some old favourites!

Long filenames are commonplace on the internet but your mileage may vary Why not give it a try on a floppy? You ve got nothing to lose In the following example I m working from floppy in Drive A but you can setup a hard disk partition or removable media such as a ZIP or EZ cartridge

- From the Minix distribution copy the MINIXFS.XFS driver to your MINT folder
- Install an alternative file selector which supports long filenames such as Boxkite or Freedom then reboot.
- Execute MINIT TTP from the Minix distribution and enter the parameters "-V -n 2 -P A." "-V" installs a V2 file system for the longer names "-n 2" tells Minix to allow up to 30 character filenames "-P" adds protection to stop TOS trashing your partition
- Reboot and test the installation by calling the file selector from TOSWIN. When you access drive A the filename space should have automatically increased and you're up and running Now read the Minix documentation! ◆



▲ Freedom and Thing working together from a Minix partition

Most of this software is available from PD/Shareware libraries and on line services but because I had trouble finding all the software I ve put together a collection of MiNT compatible software available at PD prices (95p plus postage per disk) For more details send a stamp and your address to

MINT Software Resources, 4 Fernpark Close, Topsham Road Exeter Devon, EX2 6AW, England

If you have internet access check out the following addresses

General MINT software:
http://micros hensa.ac.uk/
http://atari archive umich edu/atari/
or the UK mirror at
http://src doc ic.ac.uk/packages/atari/umich/

oAESis :
http://www dtek.chalmers.se/~d2cg/oaesis/

XaAES
http://www i way co uk/~t_graham/home html

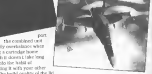
A flash in the pan?

Xav sees strange swirling patterns emanating from his toilet - on this occasion he can blame it on the Jaguar CD-ROM drive...

The first problem facing anyone who wants to buy a Jag CD unit is finding one Although they were released last year they have been spectacularly hard to find Nevertheless it is possible to track them down if you try hard enough - and if you're really lucky you might pick up a bargain (some stores have been dumping stock for as little as $30 Ed)

The box sports the usual black and red Jaguar livery containing the CD unit itself four free CDs manuals and a wall wart style power supply Yes you will need a second power socket to use the Jag CD Before you ask, you can't daisy chain the Jag and CD unit together - trust me I've tried On removing the intricate polystyrene sculptures you could be forgiven for thinking you've inadvertently bought some Star Trek merchandise - although as soon as it's fitted to the Jaguar and the lid is flipped open you'll discover the combination bears more than a passing resemblance to a toilet!

The drive itself plugs into the Jaguar cartridge socket with a through port for cartridge games although for some reason my copy of "Fight For Life" will not work with the CD unit in place Because of the size of the drive and the position of the port the combined unit can easily overbalance when pushing a cartridge home although it doesn't take long to get into the habit of supporting it with your other hand The build quality of the lid and hinge arrangement seems a little on the flimsy side although with the lid closed everything is sturdy enough Unfortunately the lip of the drive makes it difficult to press the power button on the Jag with your foot (I can't be the only person who does this?) and it is a bit awkward for left handers to operate the door open button



▲A snap from the slick opening sequence

Let the games begin

First up is Blue Lightning a port of an old Lynx game - and it shows It is essentially a flight simulator along the lines of Afterburner on the ST and I'm sorry to say the graphics owe a lot to the same era The game begins well with a number of highly polished movies and sound effects but unfortunately the game itself appears to be a poorly converted 16 bit program Despite its looks the game still plays quite well This is straight from the "If it moves shoot it" stable of game design so don't expect to rip out afterwards and steal a real Harrier jump jet!

▲Rearrange video tiles to complete each level

The next CD Vid Grid will be familiar to everyone who has played sliding tile puzzles In this case the puzzle takes the form of a rock video which must be completed before the video ends The videos feature artists such as Guns'N Roses Ozzy Osbourne and Peter Gabriel (and yes the video is "Sledgehammer") Vid Grid starts easily enough simply rearrange nine tiles into the correct order To make matters even easier tiles can be picked up and dropped into any position As the game

One neat Jaguar feature is its ability to store a small amount of information for cartridges between sessions even after turning the Jag off This isn't easy because CDs store Read Only Memory (ROM) so it is not possible to save information back onto a CD To overcome this limitation Atari produced a "Memory Track" cartridge which includes a small amount of Random Access Memory (RAM) which can be accessed by CD-ROM games

The Memory Track cartridge is plugged into the through port before switching on the drive and cartridges which support Memory Track automatically detect its presence Both Blue Lightning and Vid Grid do - for Vid Grid it is possible to start the next game where you left off previously which enhances its long term appeal considerably

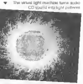
All cartridge games offer the ability to clear stored data if only to clear out your friends' high scores! Because Memory Track stores data for several cartridges a method of selectively deleting data is required Booting while holding down the [OPTION] button displays a memory manager The data stored for each cartridge is displayed along with memory details and can be selectively deleted

Like other Jaguar components the Memory Track isn't easy to find and if you can find one it is likely to command a premium price due to its rarity

One of the most impressive aspects of the Virtual Light Machine (VLM) is its apparent ability to "sense" the rhythm of the music On many programs you can see parts of the patterns moving in time with particular instruments Whilst it is a relatively easy task for the human ear to differentiate between high and low pitches it is a difficult task for any computer The data stream is a long list of ones and zeros representing the sound volume at any particular instant in time It requires some heavy duty processing to convert the data into a representation of the pitches present in the original sound

The key to this ability is explained in a theory proposed by and named after a French mathematician called Joseph Fourier His theory states any repetitive waveform can be represented by an infinite sum of sinusoids simple waveforms common in the world of maths and electronics Whilst the theory is complex it means any waveform from the sound of a stylophone to a concert grand piano can be constructed from a series of simple sinusoids

Knowing how to construct a complex waveform was little more than a mathematical curiosity but it led to the theory to construct the opposite and more practical effect called the Fourier transform Complex waveforms fed into one end of the equation produce a corresponding series of sinusoids at the other end Using this method data from a CD can be transformed from a series of values representing a complex waveform into a collection of values representing the volume of each individual frequency component In other words it is possible to determine how loud the high pitched sounds are how loud the low pitched sounds are and so on The VLM represents these individual volumes graphically



▼ The virtual light machine turns audio CD sound into light patterns

progresses the nine tiles are increased to 16, 25 and ultimately 36 and the luxury of picking up tiles is taken away To further frustrate your best efforts the entire image may be flipped upside down and individual tiles flipped left to right Imagine this when trying to get somebody's eye in the correct place Finally these effects may be combined Vid Grid is a fun game which shows off the capabilities of the CD unit nicely The videos can appear a little grainy at times but this doesn t detract from the gameplay The only complaint which can be levelled at this game is the videos soon become boring - so if you re not into rock music forget it!

▲Atmosphere and slick graphics are better than the gameplay

The next CD is a playable level of Myst a best seller on the Mac and PC platforms in this case the word "playable" is synonymous with "frustrating " The play area is far too small and probably the best use for this one is its slideshow demo

The final CD is the soundtrack to Tempest 2000 - famous for its heavy techno music This would usually be enough to put me off but for some inexplicable reason it has found a permanent home in my collection and can be used to show off the Virtual Light Machine

Let there be light!

Powering up the Jag with an audio CD in the drive switches into audio playback mode This includes an on-screen control panel designed loosely around the buttons on a standard CD player The options include play pause skip fast forward and rewind and can all be selected using standard joypad buttons

Pressing the joypad {OPTION} button switches control to the more advanced aspects of the CD player From here the playing order can be randomised programmed with selections (up to 99 steps) individual tracks repeated and the volume adjusted Sound comes out of the Jaguar not the CD unit so you ll need a separate lead to tap off the audio outputs for optimum quality

On starting a CD the Virtual Light Machine (VLM) kicks in The VLM is a "light synthesiser " programmed by Jeff Minter, which "listens" to your CD and creates swirling patterns of colour based on the music Jeff has been experimenting with light synths most of his programming career and the results are the culmination of many years research and certainly make the efforts of some other consoles look poor

There are 81 different programs to choose from although many seem to prefer music with a degree of dynamic variation such as Pink Floyd - one of Jeff's favourites A random mode changes the program every twenty seconds but this option can t be stored as the default and doesn t seem to be entirely random! Despite these minor niggles I have spent many hours "watching" my favourite music - the effects are incredibly hypnotic. A large ratio of screen to room size gives the best effect so if you're looking for an excuse to buy a large projection screen TV you've got it

Conclusion

As an audio CD player which also plays games the Jag CD is good value especially considering the clearout prices It's worth buying one just for the VLM the screenshots don t do it justice As a games platform the Jag CD is disappointing the bundled software and difficulty obtaining Jag games from high street vendors just two obvious reasons ◆

Manufacturer
JTS Atari
Tel 01753 533344
RRP: £149.99

Requirements
Jaguar and spare mains socket

Pros
VLM good audio CD controls

Cons
No audio lead supplied poor packaged games another transformer to find space for

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ATARI KARTS

Let's go karting with Colin Polonowski...

So far this year we ve had some high quality releases Attack of the Mutant Penguins Fight for Life and Rayman to name just a few Happily Atari Karts looks set to continue this trend

The gamers amongst us will notice Atari Karts bears an uncanny resemblance to a game featuring a certain Italian plumber Not that this is a bad thing Super Mario Kart was a very playable game but how does the Jag version measure up?

During loading a picture of one of the characters you ll be racing against is displayed The first thing to hit me between the eyes was the graphics We're off to a flying start graphically the Jag version takes the chequered flag The gameplay is much the same

The game seems slower than Super Mario Kart but after playing for a few minutes I was absorbed racing around the track

The game is split into four difficulty levels and each is made up of four "cups" The first three cups are available at the start but in order to play the fourth Miracle Cup you must have completed the other three On completion of the Miracle Cup you are awarded with an uprated Kart and can move up to the next difficulty level

▲Strategically placed jumps can help you avoid some of the obstacles

It takes a while to get used to the controls but completing the first few cups is easy enough About now you ll notice the lack of variety in the tracks In fact the first two cups of each level the tracks are identical but reversed so as you progress you have to race the same tracks over and over again - one real life limitation I could do without

Finishing in fourth place or better "wins" a race Failure loses a life lose three and it s game over Watch out for hearts on the track and drive over them to pick up extra lives

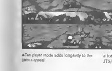
In order to help (and hinder) you there are a number of power-ups scattered around These range from a steering wheel which gives you greater control over your Kart to a turtle which slows you down making it almost impossible to stay in front

The new Pro-Controller makes it a lot easier to control the Kart JTS/Atari have made use of buttons four and six which conveniently lie under your index fingers

The backgrounds and sprites are all well designed with silky smooth movement but the music and sound FX are not so good The music is OK but doesn t push the Jag anywhere near its limits which wouldn t be so bad if the sound FX were better but they re poor The engine sound quickly becomes irritating and I had to turn it off in the end

One feature which the Jag version lacks is the battle mode In the Super Nintendo game there is a section where two players can battle each other over a specially designed track

Unlike the Super Ninendo version there s no battle mode where two players can race head to head over a specially designed extra track which is a pity At least the game has a two player mode which gives the game some lasting appeal Atari Karts is expensive but this is one of the better Jaguar games released to date ◆



▲Two player mode adds longevity to the game s appeal

♥Completing one of the Miracle Cups gives you [illegible] to a better kart

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Publisher
JTS Atari
Tel +(0)1753 533344
RRP £59 99

Requirements
Jaguar

Pros
Excellent graphics two player mode four difficulty levels

Cons
Limited number of tracks no battle mode poor sound FX

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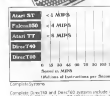

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ST User Feb 1994

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Photoline

Professional image editing on the Atari? Graphics professional Ed McGlone puts us in the picture...

Ever wondered how the adverts in glossy magazines are produced? You know the ones the Kit-Kat ad with the couple sunbathing on a jetty made out of Kit-Kats or the Pepsi campaign where all sorts of things were shown with their colour changed to blue These images are typical of the output from image manipulation software, usually the industry standard PhotoShop which is now available on both the Mac and PC platform Photoline is billed as professional image editing software for the Atari platform so can it deliver the goods?

Inside a smart colour printed box there a three floppy disks with a 48 page spiral bound manual Two versions of the software is supplied one for ST's with Motorola 68000 processors and one for machines fitted with at least an 68030 processor and a maths co-processor - typically FPU equipped TT's and Falcons

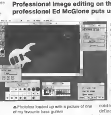
Photoline runs in any colour resolution including monochrome although all internal processing takes place in 24-bit colour In theory image editing could be carried out on almost any Atari setup although in my professional opinion the baseline setup is 640x480 in 256 colours

Installation involves copying files from the master disk into a hard disk folder then entering your details into the registration dialog

Photoline has a modern GEM - interface with non modal floating tool palettes and dialogs - making a high screen resolution even more desirable

In Use

Anyone familar with Photoshop can start work immediately - the programs are strikingly similar! Each image is displayed in its own window and a floating toolbox contains icons for all major functions Typically clicking on any icon opens a dialog box containing options for that tool For example click on the Drawing tools icon and the dialog offers a choice between Paint Flood Finger Filter or Copy along with an option to set the intensity of the tool. Intensity sets the degree of transparency set to 100 painting with red changes all the pixels under the brush to red Reducing the intensity means the colour tints the image Additionally the brush itself can have a varying degree of transparency fall off - the edge of the brush is more transparent than the centre



▲ Photoline loaded up with a picture of one of my favourite bass guitars

Some of the other tools available from the main tool box include

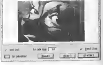
- **Flood** A fill tool for areas of a similar colour
- **Finger:** Smearing tool used for blending areas of the image together
- **Filter** Applies any of the special effects filters under brush control
- **Copy** Excellent tool for copying parts of an image under brush control

An undo function is available sometimes! Image processing is memory hungry and Photoline tries to conserve memory by only filling the undo buffer on request This means unless Undo is specifically selected before carrying out a process undo isn't available On balance I feel most users would prefer a conventional undo function with an option to disable it if memory is tight

Masks

The masking section of Photoline is extremely comprehensive and adds immeasurably to the power of the package Auto mask is a clone of the familiar Photoshop Magic Wand tool which semi-automates mask generation A mask is any area of an image protected from changes - the result of any process carried out on the image only affects unmasked areas Click the Magic wand onto a part of the image to mask out a specific area of the image for example a red car A tolerance slider sets the range of colours affected a setting of 100 masks out the entire image 0 only selects pixels of exactly the same colour leaving room for manoeuvre in-between Another very useful option enables small batches of stray pixels to be ignored which means a low tolerance level can still pick out solid areas of colour Areas can be added to the mask by shift-clicking or removed by control-clicking Once the mask is defined it can be adopted within the image During this process the edges of the mask can be softened over a user-definable number of pixels Masks can also be created using rectangular circular or freehand lassoes and once adopted can themselves be modified using all available paint tools However I have one gripe Running the 030 and FPU version on a Falcon felt easily as fast as Photoshop running on a 486 PC except for automasking which is much slower taking around a minute to automask a complex image This is very frustrating when trying to set the tolerance level for a complicated mask

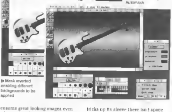
▼ Image grid distortion in progress It'll wipe that smile off your face!



Filters

Photoline includes many filters which can be applied manually using the current brush but are normally applied globally over the entire image - with or without a mask

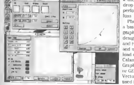
The supplied filters cover a wide spread of image processing needs including soften sharpen several different types of smoothing edge outline relief noise, sponge - they're all there and work well in general the filters are so powerful it's probably worth reducing the intensity level so the filter doesn't overpower the image! If none of the pre-set filters are suitable there's a user programmable "Free" filter Type numeric values into any of the 11 parameter fields then wait to see what happens! Some great effects can be programmed but unfortunately the manual skips over the concept behind this filter so experimentation is the order of the day Free filters can be saved or loaded at any time so if you come across a good parameter set add it to your library


◀ Guitar cut from the background using Automask

▶ Mask inverted enabling different backgrounds to be applied

Colour handling

Colour correction is another area of activity the busy image manipulator needs to understand Often a scanned image lacks contrast or is too dark or bright overall Photoline has some excellent tools for this type of work. The Colour Look Up Table (CLUT) dialog has four colour curves one for the entire image RGB values and one each for the Red Green and Blue channels Straightforward contrast and brightness for the image can be handled by two sliders and if realtime is checked the results can be seen as you work Anything more complicated for example correction of colour casts is handled by double clicking on one of the colour curves A curve editor is displayed which allows the curve to be modified by freehand drawing using the mouse.


▲ Changing the appearance of an image using Histograms the CLUT editor and the Curve editor

Rescaling

Images can be scaled by a percentage or to a fixed target size - optionally maintaining the aspect ratio Impressive interpolation algorithms ensures great looking images even when reduced to a fraction of their original size Enlarging images typically results in blockiness but amazingly Photoline adds pixels in an attept to smooth the image - the resulting image isn't as sharp as the original image but you can't have your cake and eat it! The same smoothing algorithms are also used in the Rotate command which allows image rotation in increments as small as 0.01 of a degree and the results are always good

Text handling

Text is well catered for in Photoline which can use either Calamus or GDOS vector fonts via NVDI (v3 or later) Typical everyday procedures for example placing a line of text with a drop shadow can be performed without fuss

Photoline includes a basic vector graphics module designed to create and tweak lassoes and masks and can load or save Calamus Vector Graphic (CVG) files or GEM Metafiles Vector paths can be used to guide the paint tools enabling smooth curves and straight lines to be painted onto an image superb

By now you should be getting the impression Photline is a professional and comprehensive package and you'd be right I've covered masks filters text handling and rescaling because these are the tools of the trade but Photoline has plenty of tricks up its sleeve there isn't space to cover in detail including

- Projection of an image onto a user defined 3D shape
- Warping - the distortion of an image by projection onto a grid
- A whirlpool "Strudel" distortion effect
- Mosaic effects
- 24 different brush types with edit load and save options
- Lasso copies between images via Drag&Drop
- Lassoes can be used as brushes
- Colour selection and palette organisation via Drag&Drop

Most of the tools have hidden strengths which become apparent with familiarity Photoline will reward anyone who spends the time to explore its capabilities No software is perfect but Photoline is the best image processing software I have ever used on the Atari platform ◆

Publisher
Homa Systems House
Tel +(613)-722-0901
Email aa414@freenet.carleton ca

UK distribution
System Solutions
Tel +(0)181 693 3355
Email: ssolutions@cix.compulink.co uk
£169

Pros
Standard interface wide range of tools and filters produces excellent results

Cons
Skimpy manual slow auto masking quirky undo buffer

Program failures and crashes

Mark Baines examines some of the reasons programs don't work as they should and what you can do about it...

One of the most frustrating times working with computers is when a program crashes on loading or suddenly stops working This soon leads to loss of confidence in the applications concerned - especially if data is lost in the process

Sometimes with experimentation it is possible to figure out what happened but occasionally you just have to give up and stop wasting time There are so many reasons why programs crash there is no panacea for all ills What we can do is start you off thinking about possible causes which may well help you find a solution

Reasons for failure

Corrupted program If the program crashes at the same place every time it could be a bug Before reporting a problem to the programmer make sure a fresh copy of the program suffers the same problem

Virus attack. There are nearly 100 different viruses on the Atari platform but they are not commonplace Use a program such as the Ultimate Virus Killer (UVK) to check and disinfect disks were necessary

Incorrect installation If the program used an installer you may have made some incorrect selections and the wrong files have been copied over Programming packages word processors and DTP software are typically affected Try deleting any files created and re-install

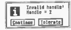
Missing configuration files Many programs need configuration files to store default working parameters The result may be harmless or serious but the solution is the same Re-configure the program and/or configuration files and save the parameters

TOS incompatibility Old programs may not run correctly on later TOS versions Look for a more recent version of the software Anyone using TOS 1 0 or 1 02 should consider upgrading to TOS 1 04 2 06 or one of the replacement operating systems such as MagiC or Geneva

Hardware incompatibility Some programs won t work with the BLITTER chip fitted in Mega STs or the processor chip cache on a Mega STe Switch off any hardware modifications including processor accelerators OverScan or serial port modification and see what happens If these hardware modifications use Auto folder programs you may have to change their running order in the Auto folder See below

Incompatibilities with other programs This is probably the biggest cause of program failure apart from bugs It is also one of the hardest to solve because it involves thinking about other programs - not just the one apparently causing the problem Most of us install Auto folder programs and Desktop accessories in memory and these are often at the root of problem systems

Crashes before the Desktop appears are usually caused by a clash between Auto folder programs Most of these are Terminate and Stay Resident (TSRs) which run at boot-up and remain in memory periodically performing some task or waiting for an event to trigger them


Invalid handle!
Handle = 2

▲NVDI likes to pick faults with other programs Select Tolerate or if it happens frequently turn on 'TOS compatibility' in the NVDI configuration CPX

2 Bus error
Occurs when a program tries to use memory that does not exist - or is protected and inaccessible

3 Address error
Occurs when the 68000 processor in an ST is accessing a 2 or 4-byte part in memory on an odd-byte location The 68000 can only access 'even' addresses This restriction is lifted in the 68030 processor in the TT and Falcon which can access bytes words and longs anywhere in memory

4 Illegal instruction
Occurs when an instruction is encountered by a processor that is not in its instruction set

5 Divide by zero
Occurs when a program tries to divide something by zero The result is undefined and unpredictable

6 CHK instruction, indexing error
Caused by a special instruction in the 68000 processor called a CHK instruction Some compilers and programmers use this instruction to make sure that indexes into arrays are never negative and are not bigger than the size of the array

7 TRAPV instruction, overflow error
Caused by a special instruction of the 68000 called a TRAPV instruction If a program tries to add two numbers whose result is too big for the available storage space - an overflow has occurred

8 Privilege violation
Occurs when a program is in user mode and tries to execute an instruction that is only allowed in supervisor mode

9 Trace error
The CPU can be set to jump to a specific address after every machine instruction is executed This address is normally used by programmers using debuggers to step through a program. If this address has not been set and a trace does occur then this error occurs

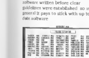
24 Spurious interrupt
Occurs when a bus error occurs during a system interrupt others may be combinations of the above, one row of bombs printed after another My record is about 60!

Besides bombs other errors are intercepted by TOS and reported to the screen.

The BIOS part of TOS can return non-fatal error messages from a program - usually these are displayed in an alert box

Name	Number	Meaning
E OK	0	OK no error
ERROR	1	Fundamental error e.g Drive not found
EDRVNR	2	Drive not ready
EUNCMD	3	Unknown command
F CRC	-4	CRC error
EBADRQ	5	Bad request, invalid command
E SEEK	-6	Seek error track not found
EMEDIA	7	Unknown media (invalid boot sector)
ESECNF	-8	Sector not found
EPAPER	9	No paper
EWRITF	10	Write fault
EREADF	11	Read fault
	12	General error
EWRPRO	13	Disk is write protected
E_CHNG	14	Media change disk was changed
EUNDEV	15	Unknown device
EBADSF	16	Bad sector on formatting
EOTHER	17	Insert other disk
EDISC	18	Insert disk
EDEVNRS	19	Device not responding
EHARD	20	(unknown)

into action If more than one of these is waiting for the same event or trying to access the same part of memory or TOS then your system is sitting on a time bomb! This is most likely to occur if you re older software written before clear guidelines were established so in general it pays to stick with up to date software



▲Use AutoSort or equivalent to change the running order of programs in your AUTO folder

If the crash occurs before the Desktop appears run a series of boot-ups starting with an empty Auto folder and each time installing an additional Auto folder program until the crash occurs The last program to be installed before the crash is the culprit - or one of them. Use a boot manager such as Superboot or XBoot otherwise you will have to rename all the * PRG filename extenders to * PRX and rename one * PRX to * PRG before each reset! If that doesn t solve the problem you may need to change the running order Some programs expect to run first or last and obviously if you re using more than two of these there is potential for trouble From TOS 2 onwards the running order can be displayed using the No Sort option in the View menu To change the running order with the minimum of fuss use a utility such as DirSort or AutoSort (widely available from PD/Shareware libraries or on-line services) Don t give up It takes time, perseverance, compromise and dozens of reboots to establish a stable system if you re running lots of extras Desktop accessories can cause similar problems but major incompatibilities are much rarer However if you are still experiencing problems with no Auto folder programs loaded install accessories one by one until you find the culprit Again changing the running order may solve the problem

Bugs. The biggest culprit will always be bugs in program code these are beyond your control and hard to track down Try running the program on a clean system which means no Auto programs or Desktop accessories - a boot manager makes this easy to do If the program still crashes at the same place or when performing the same actions you have probably found a repeatable bug Please do take the time to report the details to the programmer along with your system details don t assume someone else has reported it A while back I was involved in a project near completion and reported a fundamental error which beta testers over the previous two years hadn t reported - I guess they all thought it was so obvious everyone else had reported it!

Bombs

Most crashes result in the infamous bomb icons which appear on-screen They re called processor exception errors and are the computer s way of informing you something nasty happened The best thing to do is switch off your system for ten seconds or so then reboot. A warm reset isn t always good enough because it doesn t completely re-initialise memory Some programs include crash catchers to report some diagnostic information which may help the programmer when reporting problems ◆

Profile File Report Options Help
PROFILE 2 Main Display

▲PROFILE2 generates a detailed analysis of your system ideal for inclusion with bug reports

The GEMDOS part of TOS can also return error messages from programs

Name	Number	Meaning
EOK	0	Operation was successful, no error
EINVFN	32	Invalid function number
EFILNF	33	File not found
EPTHNF	34	Path not found
ENHNDL	35	Too many files open (no more handles left)
EACCDN	36	Access denied
EIHNDL	37	Invalid handle number
ENSMEM	39	Insufficient memory
EIMBA	-40	Invalid memory block address
EDRIVE	-46	Invalid drive specification
ENSAME/EXDEV	-48	Not the same drive (cross device rename)
ENMFIL	-49	No more files
ELOCKED	-58	Record is locked (file locking and network)
ENSLOCK	59	No such lock (unlock an unlocked record)
E RANGE	-64	Range error
ENAMETOOLONG	64	Range error (part of file name too long)
EINTRN	-65	Internal error
EPLFMT	-66	Invalid program load format
EGSBF	-67	Set block failure due to limit on memory growth
ELOOP	80	Too many symbolic links
EMOUNT	200	Mount point crossed (indicator)

The Spanish Atari scene

Andrew Hervey looks at a small but determined Atari community in a part of Spain off the tourist track...

Imagine being an Atari user in a country where the majority of software is in a foreign language and where the number of suppliers of hardware is diminishing rapidly

I'm talking about Spain not the UK, although the scenario does have a familiar ring to it I visit Spain several times a year and often wondered if there even was an Atari scene, since I had never seen an Atari magazine for sale

It was with surprise and curiosity I came across an address for an Atari user group in Valladolid in the centre of Spain in an old copy of ST Format Around a year ago I attended an annual film festival there so to satisfy my curiosity I wrote to the group Since then and over the course of the year I've kept in touch It's been interesting to compare how they how they have developed and changed compared to the UK Atari scene.

I first made contact with Feranando Carrasco in 1995 he was known in the group as FernandiTTo partly because he owned a rare "Spanish" TT and partly because it means "little Fernando" - and he is vertically challenged Meeting Fernando made a pleasant diversion from darkened cinemas He told me about the ParAtari group ("para Atari" meaning "For the Atari")

A local computer shop used to provide a free meeting venue which resulted in the formation of the ParAtari club Unfortunately the shop closed but the group has carried on meeting in each others flats or houses for nearly three years now The members each pay a small annual fee to cover the club's running costs plus a little extra to collectively buy hardware and software to try out They are also in contact with Atari users in other parts of Spain who although not club members are happy to advise and support where they can Of the fifteen members in 1995 two had TTs four Falcons and the rest STes, most using their machines for tasks such as DTP or music

ATARI power
Numero 5
Abril 1995
100 ptas
MIDI ¿Qué es? ¿Para qué sirve? ¿Cómo funciona?
Cómo recuperar ficheros borrados y no morir en el intento (I)
ATARI ST
10 años de historia
¡NOTICIAS!
¡PROGRAMAS!
¡JUEGOS!
¡OPINION!
40 paginas
Geneva
Sistema operativo multitarea para ST

roddgibe

Fernando again and two other club members Augustin has been using computers since the Spectrum era and now enjoys writing utilities and adding to the tiny pool of native Spanish programs Joaquin also programs (as do the majority of the club members) and had recently completed a tracker program for the MegaSTe and TT He also has internet access via the University making him the natural source for the latest PD/Shareware releases

I recently contacted Joaquin again who brought me up to date Over the last year two hardware suppliers have closed down and ParAtari has lost Fernando he changed platforms for work reasons sold his TT and left the group which currently has nine active members It's not all doom and gloom though! Joaquin has taken over from Fernando and is enthusiastically promoting the use of the Atari for the Internet He's set up his own web pages and a mirror for the French ftp site **brunner.esam.fr**

Joaquin uses CAB and OASIS and is happy to help Spanish Atarians get on-line. The group produces a 36 page A5 photocopied fanzine called "Atari Power" which is still going strong The content is impressive with well researched articles and page layout which puts many glossy magasines to shame "Atari Power" is produced by Kike who lives in San Sebastián (a smart seaside town on the north coast) using Fernando's old TT - still being put to good use. If you are Spanish or learning Spanish why not subscribe to "Atari Power"? Bi-monthly issues cost a mere 100 pesetas (50p) per copy plus delivery Contact.

ATARI POWER, Kike
Fernandez Bertolan Txerrita
5-4°D 20017 San Sebastián
Guipuzkoa Spain

Finally there are plans to organise a user group meeting in Barcelona Please get in touch with Tito Teclado for more details Email
Gerentes Torrente@vlc.servicom es

Contacts

PARATARI ST/TT/Falcon Users Group Joacquin Ferrero c/La Vida 6, 6D 947009 Valladolid Spain
Email Joaquin at explorer@gui uva.es
Website URL
http //www gui uva es/~explorer/Atari
FTP ftp gui uva es./pub/atari◆

User Group NEWS

New Atari User Groups

Building on the success of the User Group displays at the recent Atari shows new user groups are being formed on Merseyside and in Yorkshire To register your interest and obtain further details, please contact

Mark Dyas 10 Apollo Way Netherton Merseyside L30 7PH Telephone 0151 284 2307 Email mdyas@lallatsea demon co uk

Stephen F Barszczak, White Rose Atari Group 14 Camberley Mount Holmewood Bradford BD4 9HD Telephone 01274 826353

Both Mark and Stephen can also be contacted in the N ST USERS area of the NeST bulletin board network

Cheshunt Computer Club report

Derryck Croker reports

At its October meeting the Cheshunt Computer Club paid host to Steve Llewellyn editor of Calamus User magazine His demonstration of MagiC Mac running DA s Vektor at a good turn of speed in full colour demonstrated MagiC running on other platforms is a practical alternative to owning a Falcon or TT

Meanwhile I had brought my BBS setup and although it wasn't possible to dial from the clubroom, members could browse the messagebase using the LED off-line reader for point systems The Syquest EZ135 removable disk system proved ideal for portable data storage The Cheshunt Computer Club meets monthly at

The Garden Room Wolsey Hall Windmill Road Cheshunt which is just over a mile from J25 of the M25 The next meeting will be held on December 18th and the following one on the 22nd January Reminders are posted in the T_Ataris and N ST Users echos in TurboNET and NeST respectively and in the atari user gps conference on CIX. For more details write (with SAE) to

Derryck Croker, 196 Coates Way Garston Watford Herts WD2 6PE Telephone (answerphone if out) 01923 673719 BBS Netmail TurboNET 100/1011/0 24 or NeST 90 102/140.24 Email derryck@cix compulink co uk

STAG party

Scotland's
Atari
Group

The next meeting of STAG will be on 21 January (we re having a break in December) It will take place as usual in the upstairs lounge of The Railway Inn Main Street Howwood The doors open at 7pm with a formal opening at 7 30pm everyone is welcome

The Railway Inn is easy to find if you have your own transport. You'll need to find your way onto the A737 between Johnstone and Lochwinnoch the new bypass completed a few years ago Between Johnstone and Lochwinnoch take the Howwood exit and follow the road into the village of Howwood where The Railway Inn is on your right hand side just after entering the village

For more information send an SAE to

Sandy Thomson 41 Mayfield Crescent, Howwood PA9 1BL Email sandy_t@cix co uk

The inaugural meeting of STAG (EaST/Central) will be held on 10th December as we go to press the venue is still to be finalised but it will be in the Stirling/Alloa area Contact Paul Walsh for details Telephone. 01259 720230 Email hamishtpb@cix co uk or NeST 90 100/300

Bunch of Wags

WAG
Wessex
Atari
Group

Roy Goring reports from the Wessex Atari Group (WAG) meeting held 14th September 1996.

About fifteen Atarians gathered for an informative MIDI demo given by Owen Philip One member in particular was asking probing questions and I expect we shall be listening to some MIDI files soon! Owen explained it was relatively cheap and easy to start producing music All that s needed is a MIDI control keyboard a MIDI box an STe and some speakers Owen played some of his own compositions then showed how to build up a song with different instruments all from the keyboard The rest of meeting he was kept busy answering questions from individual members

Virtual Website

The UKAAUG Virtual Web site put together by Chris Good was previewed before making its debut at the Atari Shows The next WAG meeting will be held on Saturday 14th December 1996 at 2 00pm in the Whitchurch Fire Station Hampshire Whitchurch is just off the A34 When you reach the roundabout in the centre take the B3400 to Andover the Fire Station is 100 metres on the left Everyone is welcome ST and Falcon demos will also be on display For more details contact

Roy Goring Email, rgoring@netnet.co.uk or NeST 90 100/310 Telephone 01705 611847◆

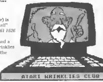
All User Groups are invited to send in meeting reports and details of forthcoming meetings for inclusion on this page - use it or lose it! If you re thinking of starting a new User Group you can use this page to publicise your plans Please submit all copy on disk in ASCII format along with suitable promotional material where available

I wonder if...

Jimbo Hornby, founder member of the Atari Wrinklies Club, is full of wonder...

"For all knowledge and wonder (which is the seed of knowledge) is an impression of pleasure in itself"

Francis Bacon 1561 1626



A couple of months ago I had a letter from one of the Wrinklies saying he had "prodded the plastic for four years" and that recently "the fun of finding things out had evaporated" he feels the honeymoon period is over From his collection of well over 200 floppies only a dozen or so now see much use.

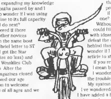
I m sure we all hit this stage at some time or other I know I did I bought my first computer in 1989 an Atari 520STFM simply because it was on display in the shop After fiddling around I managed to get the plug on the end of the wire after several journeys back and forth to the to the shop I eventually got up and running nobody told me I needed a disk in the slot to get to the desktop - who reads instructions! (Ed I guess Jim doesn t because if you wait long enough the desktop will appear without inserting a disk)

It took me at least six months to get to grips with the thing mainly because the jargon was a complete mystery to me It was wonderful I added everything I could think of to the Diary wrote Spreadsheets on every imaginable topic and generally felt I was expanding my knowledge

The months passed by and I started to wonder if I was using my machine to its full capacity what do I do next?

I wondered if there are any other novices around in the same boat as me A brief letter to ST Review (I got the Star Letter Prize no less) and the Atari Wrinklies Club was born After the glossy magazines closed we removed our age restriction to welcome wrinklies of all ages and we currently have approximately the same number of members as our average age One nice thing about the post Atari era is that most members ask what they can do for the Club instead of what the club can do for them

I m retired and can easily spend ten hours at a stretch in the spare bedroom sitting at the keyboard and I enjoy every minute! There s always something to do apart from running the Club my favourite saying is "I wonder if? "



I wonder if...

I can find a piece of Clip Art to suit that situation or this story? Can I find an image I can alter or shall I create one from scratch? Can I figure out how the programmer did that? Is there a program to do this If not could I write one?

Without much effort I could fill this magazine with ideas but that would defeat the original thought behind this article I wonder if I can write an article to start a new thread If you re wondering what I mean by a "new thread" I wonder if you will take the trouble to find out?

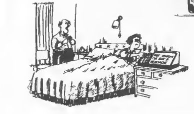
My system has adapted as I ve wondered what to do next I have added a hard drive modem colour printer Tabby and lots of other stuff I wonder if my vote at the next general election will result in a pension increase so I can afford a colour flat bed scanner? I can dream can t I? Oh well it s getting late and I need my beauty sleep I wonder if my wife has still got her headache!

I wondered if I could find a suitable quotation to add to the end of this article and I wonder whether Joe will cut it

"Nam et ipsa scientia potestas est"

The Wrinklies club has no membership fees but new members are asked to send 20 second class stamps as a one off gesture to help towards postal costs Write to Jim Hornby at

60 Crumpsall Street, Abbey Wood
London, SE2 0LR Telephone +(0)181 311 2397◆


NOT TONIGHT I'VE GOT A HEADACHE

'You don't even talk to me any more'

Productivity Pack one for SL.

£15.00

The Calamus Productivity Pack comprises of a selection of Document Templates, Raster Settings, Colour Curves, Fonts, Document Setups, Reference Text files and Vector Clip Art, all of which have been designed to provide a valuable reference to any SL Win 95 or NT user.

Whilst the original templates where produced in US Letter format, UK users will be please hear that Calamus User have re-formatted many of these documents into the more favourable A4 format. These Templates include documents for Business, Personal, Music, Invoices, Purchase Orders and much more.

USER to USER Hints Vol 1,2 & 3.

£ 10.00 Per Volume

£ 25.00 all 3 Volumes

The USER to USER programme has been highly successful in both the USA and Canada, and is now available to European Users of Calamus SL through the Calamus User Magazine.

USER to USER files are written by Calamus SL owners like yourself. The authors have presented their work to assist other users and at the same time have earned discounts on their own future purchases from MGI Software in Canada. This is hoped will be continued throughout Europe. Each volume contains lots of useful hints, tips and tutorials, and are highly recommend to everyone, regardless of their experience with Calamus SL.

Mix 'N' Match PD Fonts.

£ 3.00 Per Disk.

CALAMUS USER is at present building a definitive library of Calamus PD fonts and have at present over 650 fonts listed on our database which is growing every day. An ascii text file containing the current list of fonts in our library can be obtained from us directly by send a blank disk and 2 x 1st class stamp.

Any of the listed fonts can be purchased from us on a Mix 'N' Match basis. All there is to it. You pay £3.00 and choose any 20 fonts.

SERIOUS TYPE Font Collection.

£ 3.00 Per Disk

£ 20.00 Any 8 Disks

£ 64.00 All 32 Disks

If you are looking for new fonts for use with Calamus, but don't want to pay a fortune then look no further than our Serious Collection. The Serious Type Collection includes over 330 Calamus fonts available on 32 disks and offer quality fonts at an affordable price.

These fonts can be used to give any document the look that will stand out from the crowd. Many of the fonts in this collection are included as whole families, something that other collections tend to neglect.

CALAMUS USER

The Independent Magazine for Calamus DTP users.

All Cheques or Postal Orders should be made payable to:

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☎ Helpline·01304-369364

All prices include postage and Package within the UK,
Europe and the rest of the world add £8.00 (except for subscriptions).

Productivity Pack one for 1.09.

£15.00

For those using Calamus 1.09 and 1.09n who may feel left out by the release of the SL Productivity Pack. We are pleased to announce the release of the 1.09 and 1.09n compatible version. This unique pack comprises a selection of Document Templates, Fonts and Vector Clip Art.

The Definitive Calamus PD Font Guide.

£10.00

With the large quantity of Calamus fonts currently available within the public domain and the great interest shown in our own Mix 'n' Match PD font collection, we at Calamus User have endeavoured to produced a definitive guide which we hope includes most of the PD fonts currently available. This A4 Guide has been designed so that each entry shows all the characters available within that font, thereby making it easier for the user to choose the right font for any job. Also included is a list of duplicated, incomplete and fatally damaged (i.e. they won't load) fonts. Furthermore as more PD fonts become available, we will be releasing an upgrade to update this definitive font guide.

The Outline ART 3 Guide.

£10.00

For anyone using DMC's Outline ART 3.0, our printed guide will be a welcome addition to this vector art package. Originally produced by Calamus user Mike Hosking, this disk based guide was available as a Calamus SL (94 version) document. This format caused problems for some potential user.

Firstly the user would require the latest version of Calamus SL (94 or 95 version) to load and output this document to their printer, thereby restricting it's output to those with the later versions. Secondly, the printed output would only contain a single sided page per sheet, thereby making the final printed guide rather sizeable. So to overcome these problems, we at Calamus User have re-produced this guide in a A5 hard copy format which is ready to be placed into any standard A5 binder, thereby offering a useful reference to all OLA 3 users.

SERIOUS ART Vector Clipart Collection.

£ 3.00 Per Disk.

£ 20.00 Any 8 Disks.

£ 64.00 All 32 Disks

The Serious ART Collection at present includes over 100 disks of Black & White and Colour images in Calamus CVG format (with more to follow). All of those have been designed to add impact to any Calamus document, and because they are in vector format you will be able to scale them to any size without losing their original quality.

Each disk has been Categorised for ease of use and at present include:

Aircraft(5), Animals(8), Banners(1), Birds(3),
Borders(2), Business(6), Cartoons(15), Cats(3),
Celebrations(4), Children(3), Computers(1),
Design(8), Dogs(3), Education(2), Fantasy(22),
Food(8), Headlines(2), Household(4), Insects(1),
Landmarks(9), Law(4), Leisure(3), Men(62),
Medical(6), Military(4), Music(3), People(9),
Religion(4), Sealife(), Ships (3), Signs(6),
Space(4), Sport(11), Travel(2), Tools(3),
Transport(11), Xmas(4) *(No of Disks)*

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Reader Disk 2

We believe our Reader disks offer outstanding value for money and many subscribers have opted to receive the disk with the magazine, however we appreciate that many readers wish to see what is on the disk before deciding to buy it So for these people we are pleased to announce a new service! Reader disks are now available on an issue-by-issue basis for just £2.50 inclusive of UK post and packing £2 75 Europe £3 00 Rest of World So if you missed out on issue 1 here s a chance to complete your collection

Please make all funds paysble to the "Atari Computing Group" and send orders to

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"Rois Bheinn" Overton Crescent
Johnstone PA5 8JB SCOTLAND

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If your copy of Atari Computing is delivered from one of our distributors please obtain your Reader Disks from them

Reader Disk AC#1

GEMTrek v1 1e Exclusive, Freeware, Jurgen and Uwe Holtkamp Tribute to Star Trek in guise GEM based battleships game

STD Codes v1.4 Freeware, Mark Baines CPX to find location from STD code and vice versa

RS232 Config PD Martin Cubitt Ease serial port problems using Ghostlink between Atari<>PC

ST-Guide v1.4e Fairware Holger Weets Hypertext viewer de-facto Atari standard utility

AppLine v2 1e Fairware Holger Weets. MagIC only Windows 95 style task bar and much more!

CoSTa Exclusive Shareware Gary Priest Monitors on-line time with OASIS2/ICE CoNnect, CixComm MINTnet and STiK

Start Me Up! v1 10e Freeware Thomas Much MagiC/MultiTOS only Windows 95 style Start button and much more!

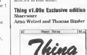
Existing subscribers can upgrade their subscription to include the reader disk. See the subscription form on page 58 for further details

We re delighted to present two heavyweight exclusive editions to complement articles in this issue.

Thing v1.09e Exclusive edition

Shareware

Arno Welzel and Thomas Binder



About Thing

Thing

Version 1 09

Copyright © 1994-96
Arno Welzel and Thomas Binder

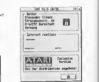
The brand new and eagerly awaited English release of this premier Shareware Desktop for TOS and compatible operating systems Thing offers animated icons background images group files ST-Guide on-line help an auto-locator long filename MultiTOS Drag&Drop Kobold ALICE TOS2GEM and AV protocol support along with many other state of the art features Thing is a modular desktop which allows the user to assign their favourite utilities In practice this means you need to install a file viewer in order to read files from the Desktop Since you'll probably have ST-Guide installed to read the on-line help it's the ideal choice.

Crystal Atari Browser (CAB) v1.5 Exclusive edition

Freeware

Alexander Clauss

CAB is currently the only graphical HTML document browser available for the Atari platform Happily it s also a full featured, stylish GEM application which offers complete HTML2 most HTML3 and many NetScape features Includes ST-Guide format hypertext help This latest release downloads text before images which makes it possible to scroll through the page and follow links without hanging around to download unwanted pages The mouse pointer changes to a pointing finger and displays the link in the window status line and animated GIFs are supported



CAB V1.5 10/96

Author
Alexander Clauss
Strassmannstr 44
D-64297 Darmstadt
Germany

STOS Compiler Fix version v1.0

PD

Les Greenhalgh

STOS officially only supports TOS versions up to TOS 1 62 but this fix can insert tables for up to 11 different TOS versions into STOS programs at compile time It s automatic which means your compiled programs can run equally happily on a vintage 1985 TOS 1 0 ST and the latest Falcon TOS 4 04

AVR and SYN format samples

PD

Colin Monro

This sample collection was created using Sound Chip Synth to accompany the review in this issue. The AVR files can be played using Atari s own System Audio Manager (SAM) and many other utilities The SYN files are for use with Sound Chip Synth

Did you hear anyone say "Goodbye"?

Author Donald A Thomas, Jr (10/4/96)

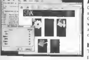
On Tuesday July 30 1996 Atari Corporation presented its shares to JTS Corporation - a disk drive manufacturer Recently Atari moved out of its Sunnyvale headquarters without even saying "Goodbye" read all about it ◆

Shareware and public domain

CAB 90%

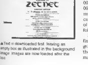
Communications
Freeware, all Ataris

Roy Goring takes a look at the Atari Computing exclusive release of CAB...



▲Internet software can now be run using STiK via CAB The STiK web page maintained by Nicholas Flintham contains all the latest STiK client software

Despite being the only graphical web browser available the author continues to add heavyweight features in each release This version sees the introduction of a major productivity improvement CAB now downloads and displays text first leaving empty spaces which are subsequently filled with images In practice this means you can scroll up and down pages while images are being converted and follow links to other pages without hanging around for unwanted images to be displayed



▲Text is downloaded first leaving an empty box as illustrated in the background image Images are now loaded after the text

Animated GIFs

CAB can now display animated GIFs as animations or stills Animated GIF files contain a series of frames which can be used to attract attention or annoy surfers depending on your point of view

It's rude to point

The cursor now changes to a pointing finger when moved over a link and the link address is displayed in the window status line This helpfully reveals whether the link is on a different web site a different page or somewhere else on the same page It also makes links on multicoloured pages easier to find

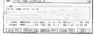
The Print routines have been overhauled yet again and are capable of full colour output given the elusive combination of printer and suitable NVDI driver However there are still some niggly problems to be resolved.

Cache back

Run an off line session after upgrading to this CAB version because the cache structure has been changed and can take several minutes to be converted dependent on the size of your cache

The new structure creates a series of folders, labelled A to Z, and adds files sequentially as follows File 00000001 goes in A, 00000002 in B 00000003 in C etc This makes for much faster disk access with large caches compared to the old method of storing everything in a single folder

Finding a particular file is much like finding a needle in a haystack so do grab a copy of Cache Ed and turn those numbers into something more manageable.



▲Cache Ed is the easiest way to access cached files

CAB offers 90% of the functionality of NetScape or Microsoft Explorer which is a remarkable achievement for a program capable of running on a standard ST

There are still minor problems with the CAB OVL module and STiK but as any comms enthusiast will admit it goes with the territory! Off-line CAB is rock solid

I'd like to see standard Frame support implemented instead of the half-baked but usable workaround in the current release An option to download pages and images while browsing in text only mode would be a great help and save the on-line time wasted while CAB converts images for display Off-line the option could be toggled on again to view the images

Surfing

Apart from CAB you'll need an Internet account, STiK and the CAB OVL module In the UK Internet accounts are available from £7 50 per month upwards Check the provider supports the SLIP or CSLIP protocols because some don't! STiK is the TCP/IP stack which connects your computer to the web using your Internet account The CAB OVL module adds on-line browsing capability to CAB and is not required for off line browsing Cache Ed SDCABPRG PRG and XURL are all available from PD/Shareware libraries and on-line services Please register any programs you use regularly It's the best way we as users can ensure continued support from the programmers

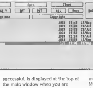
MGFTP V1.3

85%

Communications
Public domain, all Ataris

MGFTP is a GEM based File Transfer Protocol (FTP) client program for use with STiK It allows you to login to remote servers and transfer files to and from your computer

MGFTP displays the directories and files on the remote server along with their attributes in a GEM window as either icons or text This makes it easy to navigate remote file systems by point and clicking on directories in much the same way as using the desktop Files can be downloaded by clicking on them and the transfer is displayed graphically in a progress bar


Select
Open
Close
Cd up
Cd ?
GET
PUT
All
None
Quit
Options
Copyright
bin
dev
etc
lib
pub

The Select button displays a server hotlist where the addresses of servers can be inserted edited or deleted Double-clicking on any entry activates STiK which tries to establish a connection which if successful is displayed at the top of the main window when you are returned to it

The Login procedure is for each server can be configured via the Open button The username password and the port number can be set before selecting OK to begin the login attempt

The default login details (ftp and your email address) typically logs you in as a guest on the ftp server where you can access all public directories If you have your own website simply enter your account username and password and you can access your www directory which makes MGFTP the ideal way to maintain your web pages To logoff select on the Close button

The Options dialog includes the upload and download paths anonymous login username/passwords icon/text display A protocol window can be activated to monitor the communications between MGFTP and the server - useful to help diagnose problems

MGFTP records your every move and on re-visiting a server takes you to the same directory you were in last time you logged off If you use STiK and need to access ftp servers MGFTP gets the job done with the minimum of hassle from an easy to use point and click interface

Martin Milner

ST NEWS

92%

Disk Magazine
Freeware, all Ataris, HD or 2MB minimum required

This is the final outing for this revered and long standing Atari computing institution edited by Richard Karsmakers famous for his Ultimate Virus Killer (UVK)

ST News has an unbeatable reputation for the quality of its articles and high standards of literacy In terms of quality and quantity this final issue doesn t disappoint - it s a double size issue crammed onto a high density disk

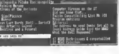
The plain DOS lookalike shell coded in GFA is slick in use and doesn t detract from the main business of reading articles Understandably this issue is commemorative in nature including articles celebrating and mourning the passing of this publication

The majority of the editorial coverage is non-computing related including some excellent fiction and music related material Several comprehensive reference works including the ultimate game cheats encyclopaedia and ultimate disk magazine caught my eye amongst all the other articles fighting for my attention

Unfortunately ST owners still without a hard drive (or large RAM disk) will not be able to read this issue which builds into a working copy from two archived files distributed on two double density disks

ST News have gone out on a suitably brilliant final issue and will be missed and remembered fondly by its many fans in the Atari community

Chris Holland


Features
Ed Lst
(?)Reviews
Options
Adventure Solutions
Adventure Index
Interviews
Disk Magazine Roundup Mk V
Encyclopaedia Poculatoria Mk III
The Ultimate 'ST NEWS' Reference Guide
Stefan's History of the Demo Scene
Encyclopaedia Polska Rzeczpospolita
Pertaining Norway
Testimony of the Ancients
The Significance
The Mirror
Famous Last Words (Well ... Sortof)
Hidden Articles Solved
No Weddings and a Funeral
Have you seen me
Computer Viruses on the ST
Did you know that...
Falcon Compatibility List Mk VII
Program versions
Editorial
The Address to send Bombs (et al) to
Email Address Guide
What the Hell Happened?!
ST NEWS Back-issues & compatibility
ST NEWS Colophon

Special Offers from Floppyshop

Christmas Promotion on Positive Image v1.12

The image processing and retouching package for Atari computers. Retouch 24-bit True Colour graphics on an ordinary ST without loss of image quality. Print out your masterpiece to almost any printer (including colour). Positive Image is brimming with features many of which are a first on Atari computers. What's more, it's under continuous development. Package includes enhanced versions for TT and Falcon users. Fully compatible with all graphic cards, it even runs on PCs and Macs under any of the available ST emulators! Recently upgraded to v1.12. Minimum Requirements: 1 megabyte.

From the release of Atari Computing issue 2 until 31st December 1996 you can purchase this leading graphics package for just £49 + P&P (UK £2, Europe £5, Rest of World £10). This offer is STRICTLY limited and Positive Image reverts back to £65 + P&P from 1st January 1997. You'll never get another deal like that! Order now to avoid disappointment. Please quote reference Atari Computing 2 in order to take advantage of this offer.

EZ-Art Professional

Is the leading paint package for the Atari ST. It offers a fast friendly icon driven interface with a vast array of drawing tools and block manipulation facilities. Supports the use of up to 10 workscreens, makes use of the STE's extended palette (even on an STFM!), allows multiple fonts and has tons of special FX. Complete with a fully illustrated 60 page manual. Requires a colour display. Special price just £10 plus P&P (£1 UK, £2 Europe, £3 rest of world).

Family Roots II

The leading genealogy package for Atari computers. Currently in use by hundreds of Atari users worldwide. Features a nice easy to use graphical interface where you create individuals by placing titles on a grid and link them up with each other using a few simple mouse clicks. Includes easy access to each individual's database record and a powerful search facility. Supports printing of both the individual database record and the graphical tree structure. Special Price just £15 (normally £24.95) plus P&P (£1 UK, £2 Europe, £3 rest of world).

Easy Stitch

Allows you to design your own cross stitch patterns. These can be created from scratch or existing graphics may be imported. Easy Stitch allows you to generate patterns of any size up to a maximum of 10 feet by 8 feet. Using a grid, the pattern is designed on screen. Areas can be easily copied, rotated, reduced or enlarged. You can even edit individual stitches! Special Price just £10 (normal price £19.95) plus P&P (£1 UK, £2 Europe, £3 rest of world). Requires a hi-res display.

Other Products

Easy Text Professional DTP package, needs 1 Mb

Easy Text Pro Vector DTP package, needs SpeedoGDOS or NVDI 3/4 plus 2.5 Mb

Either of the above for just £19.95 plus P&P (UK Free, Europe £3, rest of world £5)

What else do we do at Floppyshop?

Quite a lot actually! We run one of the largest and longest established Shareware libraries in the world, offering a fast and efficient service on the newest releases. If we don't have what you want, it probably doesn't exist! Whatever your Atari software needs are, its highly likely that Floppyshop can satisfy them. Here's a few (we could think of many more) reasons why you should buy from Floppyshop:

- Established in 1987, we have a proven track record second to none.
- Fast efficient turnaround on orders ensures that your goods go out the same day.
- Over 3,200 ST disks full of PD and Shareware all at just £1.50 each (plus P&P see below). Every single program is detailed in our extensive ST catalogue. Send us TWO blank disks for a free copy of the ST catalogue or £1.00 and we'll supply it.
- The ST catalogue program comes complete with its own built-in ordering system. You don't even need to write out your own order! This has been a real hit with customers.
- World's largest collection of PD and Shareware for the Falcon, over 700 HD disks, all at just £1.50 each (plus P&P see below). Our Falcon catalogue contains comprehensive descriptions of every program. Just send us ONE blank disk for a free copy of the Falcon catalogue or £1 and we'll supply it.
- We source the very latest releases and go out of our way to obtain the very best software from around the world on your behalf. Nobody's collection is more up to date than ours!
- We are happy to accept payment by credit card. Phone before 2pm for same day despatch.

So What's New In PD?

You wouldn't believe how many quality programs are still being developed for Atari computers! We are currently compiling our Christmas catalogue which will be completed by the end of November. We expect to have around 50 new ST disks and over 20 Falcon titles, so don't forget to send us (see above) for your copy of the new catalogue(s).

All the Public Domain and Shareware software in our catalogues costs only £1.50 per disk plus P&P (£1.25 per order for UK, £2.25 for Europe and 15% of order value (minimum charge £3) for rest of world).

Here's an offer you can't refuse! All regular customers get the latest catalogue updates mailed free every two months. All you have to do to qualify is become a regular customer! It's the best way to keep up with what's new in Atari software.

Bargain Basement Starter Packs

At the recent Birmingham and London Atari Shows we offered a number of special starter packs, something which proved very popular. The following packs are on offer at the prices indicated below from now until issue 3 of Atari Computing goes to print. The individual disks can of course be purchased at regular prices after that but this is your chance to get them at below normal PD prices. If you have an idea for other starter packs, drop us a line and we'll consider your suggestions. All packs are shipping in promotional packaging while stocks last. Please order the packs by name and add £1.25 per pack for P&P.

Communications Starter Pack Six disk set with Connect, StarCall, WWW Pack and Oasis 2. If you're thinking of going on-line, you need look no further! This pack contains everything you need for sending/receiving faxes, surfing the Web, accessing email, ftp and newsgroups on the Net, dialing up your favourite BBS or running your own BBS. Needs 1 Mb and a hard drive. Special Price £8 + P&P.

LottoPool Pack All 17 programs in our collection dedicated to improving your chances of getting a win on the Football Pools, National Lottery or horse racing. Whether you want a simple method of generating random numbers or the scientific approach based on past results it's all there. For Lottery players there's even built in syndicate management in two of the packages. Includes the popular Lottery Companion v4 along with a money off voucher giving you a reduction in the registration fee. Can you really afford to be without this one? Five disk pack £7 + P&P.

Vector Clip Art Collection Over 800 assorted images (some in colour!) in GEM Metafile format. Unlike bitmapped images images, these can be scaled to almost any size without noticeable loss of quality. Suitable for use with Calamus, Timeworks, Easy Text Pro, Kandinsky 2.5 etc. Covers every sort of subject matter imaginable. Our best selling pack to date. Five disk pack £6 + P&P.

The Oxieware Collection The biggest bargain of all! 246 semi professional Calamus fonts at budget price. When we say semi professional, that's the author's stipulation, not ours, we find them to be as high quality as any Calamus fonts we've used! These are complete implementations (foreign characters included) and were previously on sale elsewhere at £7.50 per disk. We're offering all 246 fonts on a total of 16 disks for just £20 +P&P!

PhotoScan

Have you ever wanted to create slideshows of your holiday snaps, include your own pictures in your Desktop publishing or enhance (or even tamper with!) your favourite photos? Well we've got just the thing for you, it's called PhotoScan and it's the next best thing to buying a CD ROM and paying a fortune to have your memories immortalised. What's more, PhotoScan is affordable too!

All scans are done using professional equipment and calibrated using Kodak's proprietary colour match software. Want to know more? Just send us £1.00 for the PhotoScan demo disk (state DD or HD). It contains a number of example images and full ordering details. Alternatively you can request our PhotoScan information leaflet when ordering or send an SAE for a copy if not ordering.

Ordering from Floppyshop

Please make cheques/POs payable to Floppyshop and ensure that you add the required amount for postage. Credit card orders welcome. Overseas customers not paying by credit card must make payment in UK pounds sterling by way of a cheque drawn on a British bank, International Money Order or Eurocheque (made out in sterling).

Floppyshop, PO Box 273, Aberdeen, AB15 8GJ
Credit Card Orderline Tel./Fax: 01224 312756

STOS COMPILER FIXER V1.0 85%

Utility
Public domain, all Ataris

As most STOS programmers are aware compiled programs have to be fixed for use on different machines and TOS versions This has always been a pain and makes STOS programs seem less than professional Recently a new generic fixer program was written by Anthony Jacques based on fixer code by Les Greenhalgh This fixer allowed the programmer to pre-fix a compiled program for up to 11 TOS versions before making it available and was a great improvement However Les has now gone one better with code which patches STOS programs during compilation! The compiler fixer is tiny, just a small STOS source file another file containing instructions and a selection of DEF????.DAT files identical to those produced by STOSFIX3 programmed by Robert Quezeda To patch a file load a copy of the compiler accessory into the STOS editor, merge in the fixer source and save it out again Now copy the data files into your COMPILER folder and reload STOS On compiling a STOS program tables for the appropriate TOS versions are inserted into it and everything should be fine Up to 11 data files can be used which means program can be made compatible with most TOS versions It's a real shame this wasn't available years ago but better late than never eh? An essential utility for all STOS programmers

Martin Milner

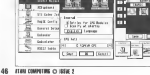
File patched. Press any key.

ZCONTROL V0.24 90%

Utility
Shareware, all Ataris

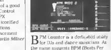
ZControl is a replacement for Atari's own XControl program one of several recently released alternatives Although widely used XControl suffered from some irritating bugs so any improvement has to be welcomed ZControl does the job with the bonus of being able to multitask CPXs This is the first release capable of running as a desktop accessory under TOS previously ZControl only worked under multitasking operating systems To install ZControl as a desktop accessory under TOS rename ZCONTROL.APP to ZCONTROL.ACC and place in the root directory of your boot partition or drive, then reboot Under a multitasking operating system you can launch ZControl from the desktop or auto launch it by placing it in your auto-start folder Under operating systems which support iconification ZControl can be iconified on start-up The first time you launch ZControl you'll be informed there's no ZCONTROL.INF file so make sure you select the Settings option from the popup configure ZControl to your requirements and save your settings ZControl can be keyboard controlled includes ST-Guide format hypertext help and supports the latest standards including iconify Drag&Drop and the AV-Protocol ZControl is much nicer than XControl and I can I think of a good reason for sticking with XControl The ability to auto start CPX modules on booting both iconified and to their previous positions would be a welcome enhancement

Martin Milner



BPM 62%

MIDI/Music
Postcardware, all Ataris (ST Medium, not compatible with MagiC)



BPM Counter is a dedicated utility for DJs and dance musicians As the name suggests BPM (Beats Per Minute) Counter is a tempo calculator Unlike similar utilities BPM offers two ways to approximate the tempo Either hit a key on the keyboard for each beat or more interestingly hit a key when the beat begins and another key after 16 beats - both methods are accurate enough so if you need this facility BPM Counter does the job There are however a couple of limitations BPM requires ST medium and does not run under MagiC

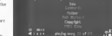
Carl Löfgren

PLAYSID 030 V1.0 80%

Music/MIDI
Freeware, separata Falcon and STa versions

PlaySID was written over the summer of 1996 by German Demo coders Cream PlaySID is a Commodore 64 music player which almost perfectly emulates the Sound Interface Device (SID) chip in that famous 8-bit computer A selection of tunes from bygone games is also included so nostalgia freaks can happily enjoy classics from the good old days along with several famous Rob Hubbard compositions in their full and unadulterated glory PlaySID is one of those pesky TTP programs but at least it displays a smart info screen while the music is playing along with various key options to control the volume and individual sound channels Falcon owners can enjoy stereo sound output It s also possible to run applications such as the Audio Fun Machine before running PlaySID and then alter the sound quality using the DSP - although I m sure purists will shudder at the thought! PlaySID is highly recommend for anyone interested in sound chip generated music or retro-computer nostalgia

Chris Holland

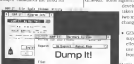

playsid 030
Title
Commando
Author
Rob Hubbard
Copyright
1985 Elite
playing song 01 of 03

DUMP-IT 2.31 90%

MIDI/Music
Shareware £5 00, all Atans

After a zillion beta releases Ben Hall s System Exclusive dump manager Dump-It! has finally been released If you are a MIDI synthesiser owner a dump utility is essential Dump-It! eliminates the need for expensive RAM cards by saving patches (or other synthesiser-related data) directly on your Atari One of the most important changes in this release is Dump It! s ability to receive SysEx data Other features include full request control, the ability to load and save in other formats (including MIDI file format) superb ST-Guide documentation and much more. Dump all other SysEx managers you have around It's been a long wait, but Dump-It! beats them all

Carl Löfgren


DUMP IT File SysEx Windows Utility
DUMP IT Program Info
DUMP IT Hardware Version
Request
No Request
Manual Mode
Dump It!
File
Functions
Exit
Load
Receive

GEM-REC96 76%

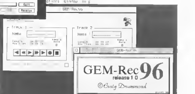
MIDI/Music
Freeware, Atari Falcon030 only

GEM-Rec96 is a two track direct to-disk recorder programmed by Craig Drummond Since I last wrote about GEM-Rec some significant developments have taken place The two most important changes are

- GEM-Rec96 now supports DSP effects you can use the effects from WinRec
- The two-track editor has (unfortunately) been completely removed

There are plenty of hard disk recording applications for the Atari Falcon but GEM-Rec96 is delightfully easy to operate - it s almost impossible to go wrong! It is a pity the internal editor has been removed but development is proceeding in a sensible direction let's hope Craig gets enough encouragement to continue development

Carl Löfgren


Options Window Help
GEM Rec96
Track 1
Name
Track 2
Name
GEM-Rec 96
GEM-Rec96
release 1 0
©Craig Drummond
More Information

BAD MOOD

Martin Milner takes a look at the Bad Mood project, one of several Doom clones under development for the Falcon

The project is being programmed as a generic game engine rather than a Doom only clone However Bad Mood itself will eventually develop into a fully playable game in its own right – to demonstrate its capability

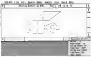
Bad Mood supports 16-bit Truecolor graphics with a variable viewport up to 320x240 pixels (smaller is faster) Genuine Doom Doom II and Heretic I/PWAD files are supported directly The entire scene, including the walls floors and ceilings are perspective mapped and textured with wraparound sky features and sealed player movement Processor accelerators such as the AfterBurner040 are supported although the real punch is provided by the Falcon's DSP chip FastRAM compatible The sources are available from various FTP sites

Parameters can be passed to the program via the command line for example passing the I/PWAD filename/s will determine which episode/mission you're warped to

Once the program has loaded all the data and performed its initial calculations you can press the Space bar and start wandering round the game levels Movement is controlled via the mouse or keyboard cursor keys with shortcuts to control the rise and drop, change the size of the viewport and so on Just like the real thing a global map can be toggled on/off, this gradually builds up as the level is explored this is itself is absorbing seeing where all the corridors and doors lead

Tooled up

To help the members of the Bad Mood team develop the program, a number of useful tools are under development



▲Designing a level in GEM DEU

FalconWadTool allows the contents of a I/PWAD file to be examined in detail and samples played, graphics viewed, etc

GEM-DEU allows levels to be created edited saved and viewed (via Bad Mood itself) Player start positions can be defined objects added or removed etc

Badshell allows Bad Mood to be run from a GEM interface A list of program versions and list of I/PWAD files can be maintained

State of play

Although some of the tools are still under development it is currently possible to design your own levels objects and incorporate your own graphics As I understand it the intention is to eventually produce a Bad Mood specific IWAD file format which will avoid copyright problems – many IWAD files are commercial ◆

ATARI COMPUTING Reader Offers

Christmas is almost upon us again and you must all be wondering what your nearest and dearest could buy you. Show them this.

To celebrate the launch of Atari Computing we had a limited number of unique Atari Computing T-Shirts made These were on sale at the Atari shows at both Birmingham and London and sold very well

They are white with the black and yellow "Atari Computing" logo on the left breast We are now able to offer these (while stocks last) to anyone who didn't make the shows

Cost including p&p is £8 each (remember to state your size - Medium Large or eXtra Large)

Those of you at the shows may also have seen the mouse mats we had made These are very high quality thick rubber mouse mats with the black and yellow "Atari Computing" logo Cost including p&p is £10 50 each

Send your cheques (payable to Atari Computing) to A|C|G T-Shirt/Mouse Mat offer "Rois Bhein", Overton Crescent Johnstone. PA5 8JB. And remember to include your address.

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PROBABLY THE BEST RANGE OF LICENCEWARE FOR THE ATARI ST IN THE WORLD!

STRATEGY GAMES

L.146 BIO HAZARD II (1mb £5.00) A turn based sci-fi strategy game of Space Marine Corp combat

L.138 EMPIRE STAR (£3.00) Science fiction war game similar to Empire for 1 to players

L.136 TRADER (£3.00) Sea trading game set in 14th century northern Europe

L.135 ANNEX (£4.95) 3D role play inspired by Dungeon Master and Doom

L.128 BLUDGEON V2 (1Mb £3.00) Computer moderated fantasy combat system for one or more players. Includes two free adventure scenarios.

L.129 BLUDGEON ADVENTURES #1 (£3.00). Six additional solo adventures for the above BLUDGEON game.

L.124 THE SANDS OF MARS (£3.00) Govern a Martian mining colony

L.132 SEA WAR (1Mb £2.50) Hi-tech version of Battleships. Design and fight your own fleet

L.105 CONQUEST 2 (1Mb, £3.00) Rule over a medieval kingdom's economy and armies

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L.98 WORLD AT WAR (1mb £3.00) A game of conquest and military strategy on a grand scale for one to six players

L.22 GRAND PRIX MANAGER (£2.50) Simulation game of running a Formula One Grand Prix team.

L.79 DARKBYTE II (1Mb £3.00) A sci-fi space strategy game in which you must destroy the DarkByte forces. Recommended at the Space Crusade game

L.59 ARTHUR OF THE BRITONS (1Mb £3.00). A strategy game with arcade sequences

L.66 CONQUEST (1Mb, £3.00). A God game in which your task is simple: to survive for one year

L.118 THEY SOLD SEVERAL (£3.00) Five games THE UNNAMED BEAST IS CLEAN, QUEST KNIGHT, LOGIC PROBLEMS and LOGIC PROBLEMS II.

ARCADE GAMES

L.147 HEAVY WAVE (£3.00 STFM STE, Falcon with STOSFIX) [illegible] tank battle

L.141 SAVAGE SPACE (1mb £3.00) 3D space combat in the style of Wing Commander

L.139 BANG & BLASTMAN PLUS (1mb, 2 disks/£6.00). Explosive 2 player Bomberman action (2 joysticks)

L.130 DESERT HAWK (1Mb £3.00) Control a Black Hawk helicopter through different missions

L.87 STORM (1Mb STE, £3.00) Arcade action clearing aliens from a stricken space freighter

L.91 STORM (1Mb, STFM £3.00) As L.87 [illegible] but for the STFM

L.120 ASTEROIDIA (£7.00 STFM version) Dave Munsie's Asteroids game

L.119 ASTEROIDIA (£7.00 STE version) Dave Munsie's Asteroids game

L.121 FRANTICK (2 disks/£7.50 STE 1mb) Fast action Dave Munsie arcade blaster

L.122 FRANTICK (2 disks/£7.50 STFM 1mb) Fast action Dave Munsie arcade blaster

L.123 SQUARE OFF (2 disks/£7.50) Dave Munsie's shooting block game

L.117 FISH TANK (£3.00) A game for younger players who must find food for their Fish without getting eaten.

L.126 AERIAL KOMBAT III (£2.50). 2 player air combat game

L42 OUTWORLD (£2.50) Take control of a space station with the sole task of keeping at least one member of your colony

L43 SNOTT 93 (1mb or .5mb) (£3.00) Platform arcade game.

L44 SEVEN GALAXIES (£3.00) Puzzle solving arcade game

L45 HUNCHY 1066 (£3.00) Hunchback arcade platform arcade game.

L A P D LICENCEWARE

Licenceware means that for every copy you buy the author receives a royalty payment from L A P D This ensures that the authors receive suitable recompense for their hard work thus encouraging them to produce even more excellent programs for the Atari range of computers It saves you all the fuss and hassle of shareware payments Licenceware programs are complete and ready to run, there are no hidden fees!

L47 CHALDA ONE (£3.00) Arcade exploration of a space ship

L48 DELUXE NOSTRAM (1mb or .5mb) (£3.00) Arcade platform action

L51 POWER CUT 1mb (£3.00) Locate 25 power sources in a subterranean complex.

L53 HOT DOG (£2.50) Greyhound racing game

L56 CASTLE CAPERS (£3.00) Platform arcade game in a haunted castle

L.76 CHRONIC INVADERS (£2.50) Space Invaders

L.80 MUNCHKIN (£2.50) Pacman

L.85 ZUFFERS (£3.00) Rescue the Zuffers from their planet

L.86 FLUFFIES (1mb £3.00). Platform game to rescue your girlfriend.

L.93 PROJECT PURIFY (£3.00) Asteroids type game

ADVENTURE & ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

L.148 DEGREES OF MAGIC WEAR EVILS WEAR (£2.50) Adventure in a parallel universe

L.143 SECRET WEAPON (£3.00) Adventure in a 3D world with a sense of the uncanny

L.131 WANDERING SCIENCE (£2.50) Solve the puzzles on an alien vessel. A graphic adventure

L.125 PATHS OF GLORY (£3.00) A sword and sorcery role-playing game

L.115 DEMON II (1Mb, £3.00) A fantasy adventure game with an overhead view and detailed point and click interface.

L.114 TIME MACHINE (£3.00) A classic text based adventure with over 100 locations and over 40 graphic screens.

L.112 CRAGHAVEN (£2.50). High adventure in a fantasy land plus ESCAPE! A second adventure by the same author

L.97 STONE COLD SOBER (£4.00). A traditional adventure game but with a point and click interface

L.09 BIO HAZARD (1Mb, £3.00) A first person perspective game to clean a space freighter of alien creatures

L.21 DEAD OR ALIVE (£3.00) A large complex and humorous text adventure game

L.31 THE CURSE OF AZRIEL (2 disks, £4.00) A graphic fantasy role-playing trading game

L.41 MURDER ON THE ORION EXPRESS (£3.00) A murder mystery game with an almost infinite variety of solutions

L.50 DEMON (£3.00) Trapped in a stone cell, your task is to escape before the resident demon gets back. 3D view

L.55 LOCATION UNIVERSE 3D (£3.00) Escape from a prisoner of war camp

L.57 LORD RAMSEY IN THE 25TH CENTURY (£3.00) Crash land on a strange planet and help Lord Ramsey escape

L.65 ZE'S LOST HIS MARBLES (1mb) (£3.00) Large graphic adventure

L.97 STONE COLD SOBER (£4.00) A traditional adventure game

PUZZLES

L.149 TRIM KBALL (£5.00) Guide rolling balls across 35 levels

L.140 SEVEN KEYS (£3.00) Increasingly challenging temple exploration game

L.133 LAZER (£2.50) Use mirrors to direct a laser around mazes

L.102 DCS COMPILATION #4 (£3.00) Four puzzle games: BRAIN DAMAGE, SHAPES, LINK, QUIZ KAL

L.101 DCS COMPILATION #3 (£3.00) Four puzzle games: OUTRAGEOUS FORTUNE, MATCHMAKER 2, FRAME OF MIND, CRYPTOGRAM

L.100 DCS COMPILATION #2 (£3.00) Four puzzle games: QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE (1mb), REBOUND, GALACTIC FRUIT BOWL, GREY MATTER.

L.06 HEARTBREAK (£3.00) An infuriating and highly addictive puzzle game played on a 7 x 7 grid

L.08 BIRDS OF TANKS (£3.00) Guide your tank through a minefield

L.11 PI SQUARED (£2.50) A puzzle game by Les Martin. Starting with a square of random symbols you are challenged to turn them all to pi symbols within the given time. There are increasing levels of difficulty

L.07 LOGIC PROBLEMS III (£3.00) Eleven challenging logic problems

L.83 ZRIKA (£3.00) Extra terrestrial puzzle game

L.96 TILES IN A MAZE (£3.00) Sliding puzzle game.

OTHER DISKS

L.71 ARTIST FREEHAND (£3.00). Complete art package with fonts, screens, animation, etc

L.27-L.28 TYPE WRITE CLIP ART 4 disk sets of quality clip art in IMG format (£10.00 per set)

L.134 FILM DIRECTOR SUITE (2 disks/£4.95) Multi-media language, system, slideshows (packages)

L.111 SUPER TALKER (£3.00) Put your own picture into demos, games etc.

L.17 ADDRESS BOOK (£3.50) Neat and easy to use database for names and addresses

L.18 CIRCUIT (£2.50) Easy to use electrical circuit diagram producing program.

L.20 SUPER SPELL (£2.50). Teaching games for the 4 to 9 year old

L.37 SUPER FUN (£2.50) More teaching games for the 4 to 9 year old.

L.01 ROBOT MATHS (£2.95) Maths tutor for children aged

L.02 MOON LETTERS (£2.95). Spelling game for ages 5+

L.04 ROBOT WORDS (£2.95) Hangman in a modern format

L.08 ALL BLOCKED UP (£2.95) Mathematical puzzles for the young.

L.10 DROP DOWN WORDS (£2.95) Spelling memory game for youngsters

L.12 MATHS FUN (£2.95). Maths for children 4 to 7 years

L.113 BBS DIRECTORY (£5.00) Money saving directory of UK BBS's

FREE CATALOGUE

For a free copy of our comprehensive catalogue just send a s.s.a.e to the address above (26p stamp for a disk catalogue or 39p stamp for a printed catalogue

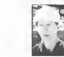
Suzy B recently gave us a CD-ROM called 'The Suzy B's Software Treasury'. Here's an exclusive interview with Michael Burkley - the man behind the compilation...

Since Maggie started life over six years ago we have relied on the enthusiasm of Atarians for articles, news and the latest demos Interviews have always proved popular so from the Maggie archives this time around comes an interview conducted over the internet with Michael Burkley - the man behind the Suzy B's Software Treasury CD

Next up is an informative article from a Norwegian guy called Gard Eggesbo Abrahamsen Now working over in Toronto Canada Gard explains how writing for disk magazines helped improve his writing skills and ultimately helped him get a job

There's an article from a contributor in Hungary telling us about the Atari scene there And finally a review of a new game/demo called Running which is probably the best Doom style game to hit the Atari scene so far Disk copies of Maggie are available from most PD libraries including Goodmans Merlin and Floppyshop If you have web access do visit our site and say hello http://www.cybercomm.nl/~spasma/maggie/maggie.htm

Maggie is also available from 42BBS on 01256 895106 download a copy today!



Richard Spowart and Chris Holland the Maggie Team

Can you give us a brief description of your early life school, work and so on?

I grew up in a small town in Southern New Jersey (named Rancocas after the Ancocas Indians who lived nearby) When I say small I mean it for the town had only about 250 people in it when I was growing up It was a community of caring and loving people who taught me about the love of God in both word and deed Believe me that can make a difference in anyone's life! I was always interested in science and suspected from an early age my career would be in those fields In high school I had a wonderful biology teacher and a chemistry teacher I began the University of Maryland as a Biochemistry major and in my Junior (3rd) year I switched to a Chemistry and Education double major because I was thinking about going into teaching To cut a LONG story short I graduated moved to Massachusetts to go to Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary met Suzy B (then Suzy E) and married her a year-and a-half later went to school for three years took some time off from my studies to work as a research chemist in polyurethane coatings for three years went back to school for a year did a year's internship in a church in Wheeling West Virginia we had a baby boy and finally graduated eight years into a degree program that is supposed to take only three years! We had another baby this time a wonderful girl Then I bought a second hand 520ST with a single-sided drive a color monitor and TOS on disk It was great and that leads me straight into an answer to the next question.

How did you get involved with the Atari scene?

I first learned about the Atari ST when I read an article in Byte magazine about the new 1040 ST It was the cover story and it told about how this Atari was the first computer that was selling for less than $1 per kilobyte of RAM (this 1 meg machine listed for $999 US) It sounded great and so I hunted a store up and drooled over one for quite some time I finally got my computer (one of a LONG list of them!) and needed some software to use on it That's how Suzy B's Software was born One day in 1989 Suzy and I ordered twenty single-sided disks from a major PD disk supplier After getting the disks and sorting them and discarding the stuff we couldn't use well we didn't have much left And so an idea was conceived. After nearly two years of work Suzy B's Software was born We've been in business for about five years now Suzy and I run Suzy B's Software from our home Dividing up the work between us Suzy runs the administrative end of the business while I comb through the 1000's of online files to bring you the best in Public Domain/Shareware offerings Suzy manages both home and business while Michael is the pastor of the Niagara Presbyterian Church and the author of 'The Unabashed Atariophile' an ongoing series of articles that were published in Atari Explorer Online disk magazine

What is your local Atari scene like in your area (for instance, retailers who support the Atari range, local user clubs, etc)

The local Atari scene is rather sparse in Niagara Falls NY The closest Atari stores are in Canada some distance away They are all run by good people whom I like. Our user group is now quite tired We meet in a local resturant for coffee and talk once a month

What, in your opinion, is the best Atari show to attend in the US?

Any Atari show that is coming up is the best one to attend I've only had the privilege to attend four shows one in Iowa back in 1989 the Toronto Atari Federation's ACE 93 and 95 shows and last year's show in Connecticut All were wonderful

What are your opinions on piracy and the internet?

Pirates should be forced to write a heart-felt and hours-spent commercial program and then have everyone else rip it off and brag about it The internet is wonderful it effectively pays for my calls to Germany England New Zealand and Australia amazing!

Any other comments?

Thanks for the opportunity to sound off! I'm also glad to tell you a little bit about Suzy B's Software I hope you'll buy one (or more) of our CD set! Michael R. Burkley the Unabashed Atariophile at Suzy B's Software ◆

Writing for disk magazines such as Maggie can certainly enhance future job prospects, as Gard Eggesbo Abrahamsen found out to his credit earlier on this year...

I know this sounds a bit far fetched but disk magazines have played an important role in my life. In 1989 I spent my time playing games and watching then programming simple demos Socially I was a loser At this time I started at high school and expected to concentrate on schoolwork and meeting new friends but several factors influenced the direction I took. I had just found ST Klubben the Norwegian ST News clone which lead me to ST News and Maggie and I was soon writing articles for various disk magazines The Atari scene in Norway was thriving and I was right in the middle of it The inspiring disk magazine format and my German teacher gave me the writing bug and I started writing short stories and poetry I continued programming which combined with the writing was a very creative lifestyle I maintained this creativity through high school and college and I became an important contributor which gave me lots of confidence Before I left college I started working at the public library and city hall and they also appreciated my contributions When I think back to the shy person I was back in 1989 it s hard for me to believe!

Writing for Maggie and ST News has turned me into an active author computer engineer and co-editor/programmer of the Atari disk magazine Scriba Communis Responsa The one remaining hurdle was finding a full time job I d no luck in Norway but had recently met an American girl giving me the idea to look for jobs abroad especially the US My experience writing for disk magazines had given me the self confidence to try anything and I received 6 job offers within 4 days from the US through the Internet Unfortunately nobody wanted to do the paperwork to get me a green card However I was contacted by O Reilly and Associates publisher of the UNIX and Internet books the vice-president was attending a conference in Holland and would interview me After several interviews they offered me a job!

I was offered a one year job as system administrator in Germany but with no guarantees after that Stefan Posthuma whom I knew via ST News was now a programmer at Gray Matter in Canada and they were looking for programmers I eagerly raised my hand was interviewed by Chris Gray author of Boulderdash and owner of Gray Matter Once again it was all the Atari related stuff I had done which interested him and within a few days I was offered and accepted a job in Canada. Four months of paperwork later I was on a plane to Toronto where I began a new life and a family

Writing for disk magazines turned me from a loser into a winner and changed my life in ways I could never have imagined at the time ●

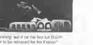
Running

At the Symposium '96 party held in Hamburg, Germany we saw a demo version of Running, a Doom clone for the Falcon...

Running evolved from Doomio one of many Doom clones in early stages of development shown at the Fried Bits III coding party held over Easter 95 in Bremen Germany

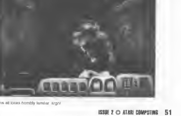
The quiet heroes behind Running are Stax Developments who look set to succeed where others have failed by bringing a Doom clone project to a successful conclusion All the basic elements are already in place including a neat status panel a first person viewpoint gun (borrowed from Duke Nukem!) and some real bad guys!

Running is an excellent example of the genre with fast, smooth updates and genuine Doom texture maps and bad guys



▲Running will it be the first full Doom clone to be released for the Falcon?

To keep things moving along on a standard 16MHz Falcon030 the floors and ceilings are flat-shaded In contrast to the fully textured walls but if that s the only compromise needed to keep the game playing smoothly I reckon Stax have done an excellent coding job There s an excellent overhead view map function which is well drawn and can be walked through just like the real Doom A continuous looped dripping sound sample keeps the atmosphere on a knife edge with the expected groan on opening doors present and correct along with the various kabooms and screams that the genre demands There is still some work to do currently the bad guys are too easy to kill for my liking Multiple weapon types seems pencilled in as there s an option on the status panel which doesn t work yet A level designer more textures and more bad guys (please tweak the difficulty level upwards) are planned along with a modem/MIDI link Death match option so you can beat up on your friends via a cable or over the phone Stax reckoned another six months work should see the project concluded and I for one can t wait The demo version is available now from PD/Shareware libraries and on-line services ◆



▲This all looks horribly familiar argh!

You've switched on your computer and a plain Desktop appears with a couple of drive icons, a trashcan and a few menus. If that sounds familiar you're probably still using the built-in TOS Desktop....

Desktops R Us

Welcome to the first collaboration between Atari Computing and AtariPhile Most of the work has been done by Kev Beardsworth and Joe Connor with a couple of tips from Domhnall Dods and myself AtariPhile #4 is carrying this feature with the added bonus of some personal views and comments on the desktops

You will notice the lack of noDesk This is unfortunate but we felt that the current part English version is not quite "English" enough for an English language magazine to cope with AtariPhile will cover a complete review when the full English version is ready Who knows Joe may select it for inclusion in the AtariPhile pages of this magazine

Starting in AP#4 is a new regular MIDI page headed by Owen Philp with contributions from Keith Turner-Cairns (of Cubase CD fame) There is even a new Music in MIDI series to help all you budding musos Also in AP#4 is the concluding part of the Positive Image review the second instalment of Adam Foster s POV Tutorial Infopedia a multi-media CD Encyclopaedia that can be run on Falcons using software from System Solutions plus lots lots more

AtariPhile is a disk based HTML magazine based at our web site

http //www walusoft co.uk/fff/

All issues can be ftp d from

ftp netkonect.co uk/pub/atari/atariphile

or downloaded from 42BBS Also available from most PD libraries or direct from AtariPhile (send disk and two stamps per issue) to AtariPhile 11 Pound Meadow Whitchurch Hant RG28 7LG

Colin Fisher-McAllum

This feature is designed to prompt you to re-evaluate your Desktop requirements A replacement Desktop can transform the way you work with your machine

Unlike some system enhancements It's easy to replace the Desktop Simply run the replacement Desktop application at bootup or launch it from the built-in Desktop just like any other program Some Desktops require Auto folder or other extras but they re straightforward to install

"The TOS desktop works for me if it isn t broke why fix it?" Fine, but all the Desktops reviewed on these pages offer features over and above the latest Falcon TOS 4 04 Desktop they all trade functionality for memory

Desktops have come a long way since the launch of the ST back in 1985 Our expectations are higher Keyboard shortcuts copy and move files file masks in windows Drag&Drop icon handling between windows and the Desktop are all considered standard features and first came together in TOS 2 0

It took Atari five years to get from TOS 1 0 to TOS 2 0 and it was during this era the replacement Desktop was born

Neodesk was the first commercial Desktop replacement and it took the US and UK marketplace by storm Dan Wilga originally wrote Neodesk because he wanted a Desktop which supported local environmental variables Neodesk is still under development today and Neodesk v4 the current release is still popular - especially in North America

Meanwhile on mainland Europe various desktops were under development including KAOSDesk, TeraDesk and Gemini - which emerged as the programmers choice. Gemini features an integrated command line interface (CLI), called Mupfel and introduced the AV Protocol which enables the Desktop to communicate with desktop accessories (see boxout) Gemini is currently hovering just below v2 and rumours of its demise are premature - nevertheless it has lost ground to the competition and slipped down the rankings

With the introduction of the multitasking operating systems (MINT/MultiTOS MagiC then Geneva) Desktops needed to be multitasking aware and some fell by the wayside

MagiC included MAGXDesk and Geneva only worked with Neodesk so we had to wait for third party programmers to muscle in and give us a choice Even today Geneva only works reliably with Neodesk but the basic MAGXDesk was soon upstaged by Ease and adopted by the MagiC developers as their top end Desktop

The story could easily have ended here except a relative newcomer called Thing appeared offering features to tempt our jaded palette. Thing provides the core desktop functions and hands over tasks such as icon and font handling search printing and file management functions to external utilities - enabling users to build a customised Desktop To enable all the external utilities to work together Thing implemented comprehensive support for the Drag&Drop Font and AV-Protocols

There's no shortage of contenders offering advanced features including animated colour icons Kobold support (to speed up file management) background image support and dozens of other desirable features So we had to take a straw poll and narrow the contenders down to our "Gang of four" Ease 4 MAGXDesk Neodesk 4 and Thing 1 09

noDesk would have been the fifth contender It s considered by its users as the most powerful replacement desktop program ever written - but then they would say that wouldn't they? Unfortunately an up to date English version didn't materialise in time

Instead of a traditional round-up style review concluding all the contenders are excellent which they are we've decided to highlight the best and worst aspects of each Desktop and leave you to decide what priority to place on individual features

NeoDesk

✓**Integrates seamlessly with Geneva.** Neodesk can also be used with TOS MagiC or MultiTOS Format and disk copy operations can be carried out as background tasks when running with Geneva

✓**Powerful install application** In addition to the standard Install Application found in all four Desktops Neodesk offers Neodesk Program Information (NPI) files These offer options to set up local environmental variables send the program extended parameters the processor speed and whether the program should be run in single-tasking mode on a multitasking system

✓**Powerful built-in search.** This feature is on a par with the best stand-alone search utilities It s possible to search for file masks (called Templates) a specific filesize creation date or time and look for file attributes Group files can be created from search results (see below)

✓Can run as a Desktop accessory or in a GEM window

✓**Built-in icon editor** An excellent but proprietary icon editor

✓**Group file support.** Group files make it possible to store executable files in one location for easy selection This avoids the clutter of Resource INF and other support files Neodesk doesn t actually move the files it creates an alias file which launches the original file Groups are created by dragging files folders and programs to a group file window Thing also offers this feature

✓**Menus and tools in windows.** Neodesk windows are equipped with pull down menus to perform most desktop tasks There are icons to select all switch between text and icon display, duplicate window copy to parent directory delete file and get file info Window navigation can also be performed by clicking on the path displayed in the window title line. Windows can also be split into two sections and scrolled independently of the other

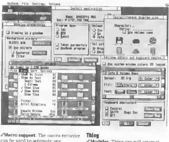
✓Built-in context sensitive help

✓**Ultra configurable** Most dialogs and windows are non-modal with editable colours and button styles You can limit the amount of memory available to Neodesk vary the date format disk format options and just about every other feature you can think of!

✗**Needs two Auto programs** NEOLOAD PRG and JAR?? PRG are required Neodesk refuses to run without the Jar program

✗No window iconification

● Here we see a selection of Neodesk s non-modal dialogs Notice the window with menus has been divided into two showing opposite ends of a directory without enlarging the window



✓**Macro support** The macro recorder can be used to automate any repetitive tasks Basically any task you can perform manually in Neodesk can be automated!

✓**Built in re-order** Objects inside Windows can be re-ordered by simply Drag&Dropping them to the desired position particularly useful for the Auto folder

✓**Desktop notes.** Text can be entered directly onto the desktop in any font, size or colour Ease offers a similar feature

✓**Widgets** If you use the Neodesk Control Panel you can have a corner clock caps lock indicator and screen saver There s even a printer queue manager supplied

✓**Auto-locator in windows.** Start typing the name of the desired file and Neodesk starts selecting objects which match the entered characters Thing and MAGXDesk also provide a similar feature

✗**Unconventional interface** Love or loathe it Neodesk s interface isn t standard

✗**Insists on icon labels.** It s odd the desktop with the most powerful built-in icon editor insists on displaying icon labels Icons typically replace text so being forced to have a label seems crazy Ease and MAGXDesk also require icon labels

Thing

✓**Modular** Thing can call external programs to carry out some tasks The author didn t see the point in re-inventing the wheel so you re left to specify your preferred utilities to view files print files search format disks add desktop notes handle files and run TOS programs in a window

✓**Auto-locator in windows.** Also available in Neodesk and MAGXDesk

✓**Extensive Function key support** Using the [Shift] [Control] and [Alternate] keys in conjunction with the function keys 40 slots are available to launch programs open files windows etc

✓**Tools menu** Up to 10 Group files programs files or folders can be added to this drop down menu and assigned descriptive text labels Ease and MAGXDesk offer variations of this feature

✓**Accessories can be loaded and unloaded on the fly under MagiC** Double-clicking on any desktop accessory installs the program in the desktop accessory drop down menu Programs can be removed by selecting any entry with the [Control] key held down MAGXDesk offers the same feature

✓**Parent icon and hot closer window navigation** The parent icon provides an easy way to copy/move files to the parent directory The window closer icon can be set to close the window with a single click - even inside deeply nested folders Alternatively a left click and hold action activates the "hot closer" which steps up through the directory tree automatically Release the mouse button at the desired location

✓**Multiple installed applications for one file mask.** Normal Desktop behaviour allows applications to open several file types so why not the other way around? Thing offers this For example with *.GIF installed as a file type in as many programs as desired Double clicking on any GIF file displays a scrollable list of installed applications ready for you to select depending whether you want to view edit or print the file An extremely powerful feature.

✓**Group file support** Similar to the Neodesk feature

✓**Full AV-Server** Thing is a near complete AV-Server (see boxout) Full documentation of supported calls is included The other Desktops do support the VA_START message and claim to be AV-Servers However, in practice, the others appear to be partial implementations and include no documentation of supported calls

✓ST-Guide context sensitive on-line help

✓**Non modal dialogs.** Thing dialogs can be left open on the desktop or iconised without halting desktop operation Neodesk dialogs are also non-modal

✓**Right mouse button support.** Thing fully supports the right mouse button Optionally a single right mouse button click is interpreted as a double left click Ease also offers this feature

✓**Real-time scrolling** A right mouse click and hold action anywhere inside a window allows real-time scrolling

✓Change resolution on the fly

✓**Auto sizing windows** The window fuller icon can optionally re-size to neatly surround all the objects in a window Ease also offers this function

✓**Try before you buy** Thing is Shareware - the only non-commercial Desktop reviewed

✓**Icon labels optional** Icons are originally designed to replace text so why bother with a text label?

✓Environmental variable support both global and local

✓**Intelligent File masks On opening the file mask dialog** Thing checks the topped window and displays masks for all available file types

✗Partial 3D-look only in colour resolutions

✗Thing assumes all users are using long filenames so you have to be careful not to enter extra characters Most of us use the standard 8+3 filename/extender format and ideally Thing should adjust the field length to suit the file system in use

✗**Quirky long filename support** Thing only supports 32 characters without space characters The Minix file system supports 126 characters and MagiC supports 64 characters both with spaces

✗**No icon editor** Thing icons are in standard RSC file format but you'll need to use an external utility to edit icons Of course if you already own Neodesk or Ease you can use their icon editors!

An AV-Server can be any application which acts as a clearing house to exchange messages with AV-Clients using the AV-Protocol

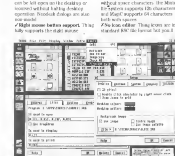
The AV Protocol was originally defined to enable Venus the desktop part of the Gemini replacement desktop to communicate with desktop accessories which explains its name AV short for Accessory<>Venus

The multitasking boom extended the usefulness of the AV-Protocol because parallel running applications could use it to talk to each other

Not all AV-Servers are created equal The AV-Protocol defines over 20 standard messages and replies yet some so-called AV-Servers only support a few messages which obviously limits their usefulness Typically the AV-Server sends VA messages to AV-Clients and they reply with an AV message

The most commonly supported message is VA_START and is used to launch programs or pass parameters to parallel running applications - typically to display files

Most of the other messages are concerned with window and file management GEM windows can be opened, shut updated have their font changed and accept data Drag&Dropped from windows belonging to other applications Files can be moved copied deleted and have their details examined


THING File Edit Display Window Extra Tools
Edit
Refresh
Icon Editor
Imagecopy
Check HD
Pinguin guide
Setup
Desktop Windows System Copying TOS2GEM
General Files Options Envir
Help
OK
Delete
Cancel

☒ 3D effect
☐ Double click simulated by right mouse click
☐ Snap icons to grid
Desktop colour:
Desktop pattern:
Background image
☒ Use image
☐ Centre image
☐ Use image palette
File > C:\THING\IMAGES\SLOEE.IMG

Program E:\APPS\EVEREST\EVEREST.PRG
Is used to open
*.TXT, *.RSC, *.INF, *.CFG
☐ Use Drag&Drop
Is used to display
*.LIS
Is used to print:
*.TXT

▲Thing showing its Tools menu the main Thing Setup dialog and the Setup dialog Notice the desktop icons have no text labels The small window at the top right is a group file containing Everest LIS files

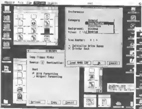
MAGXDesk

✓**Low memory overhead** In our tests MAGXDesk leaves over 500Kb extra free memory for applications compared to the next best Desktop The exact saving depends on other utilities and installed icons

✓**Cunning icon handling** MAGXDesk works with standard resource (RSC) format files and extracts the icon information for any icons used and saves the data separately This minimises the memory required

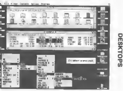
✓**Integrates perfectly with MagiC 5** An integral part of MagiC

✓**Can be unloaded from memory under MagiC** Thing Ease and Neodesk can be unloaded from memory when running programs under TOS but only MAGXDesk can be removed from memory under



▲MAGXDesk comes free with Mag!C and the current version is well worth a second look All the preferences are tucked neatly away in the single dialog displayed Notice the small window above the iconised objects contains aliased programs

▼We wanted to include one of the stylish 3D dialogs but because they are modal we had to choose between a dialog and the File tree popup which is unique Notice the selected files in different windows



MagiC This means an even greater memory saving using MAGXDesk

✓**Long filename support to 64 characters.** MAGXDesk supports long filenames up to 64 characters including space characters Thing also supports long filenames

✓**Accessories can be loaded and removed on the fly under MagiC.** Thing offers the same feature

✓**Easy Drag&Drop icon assignment.** Icons are assigned using Drag&Drop actions between the Install Application dialog and a window containing the available icons MAGXDesk updates its icons on leaving the dialog and only consumes memory for installed icons

✓**Neat use of menu bar** Sort setting displayed in the menu bar to right of last menu Now the trend is established a caps lock indicator and other indicators would be useful

✓**Change resolution on the fly** Under MagiC using CHGRES PRG this works

✓**Symbolic links (Aliases)** These are the equivalent of Thing and Neodesk Group files but offer more flexibility as they can be placed anywhere To create an alias hold down the [Alternate] key then Drag&Drop the alias to its destination If Kobold support is active temporarily disable it in the Preferences dialog otherwise it doesn't work Aliases can be distinguished from "real" objects because the icon label is italicised

✗Only works with MagiC

✗**Mostly modal dialogs.** Most dialogs are modal which means you have to exit the dialog before doing anything else. The Format and Copy dialogs are non modal presumably to support MagiC background DMA file operations

✗**Limited window navigation** There are no features designed to navigate folders or manage windows

✗**Shutdown in the Options menu** Dunno why but it's silly Every other modern GEM program uses the File menu to exit

✗**Limited configuration** All the basics are there but it's in the junior league compared to the other Desktops On the other hand it's very easy to set up

✗**Cannot mix text/icon windows.** Either all the windows display icons or all the windows display text All the other contenders can mix and match

✗**Cannot label desktop objects.** Icons dragged to the Desktop retain the full filename and cannot be renamed independently of the original object All the other contenders offer editable icon labels

Ease

✓**Drive/path popup** This feature is unique to Ease and provides an easy way to navigate around your folder hierarchy Click and hold over any drive icon and after a delay the File Tree popup appears

✓**Can select objects from more than one window to move/copy/delete** Normally selecting an object in one window deselects any selected icons in other windows

✓Accessories can be removed on the fly by holding down the [Control] key when selecting the accessory

✓**Desktop notes.** Double clicking on the Memo icon displays the Memo pad for up to five lines of text using any font size or colour A variable width border in any colour can also be added

✓Full 3D look interface

✓**Tools in window status line** Ease includes three extra tool icons in each Window status line, a close always icon an icon which toggles between text/icon mode display and an auto-size icon which adjusts itself to neatly display the contents of the window

✓**Built-in icon editor** The Ease icon editor can load and save standard resource RSC files Basic editing tools are included Neodesk also includes an icon editor

✗Requires icon labels

✗**Slow/quirky icon handling** On launching Ease there's a considerable delay before the Desktop appears especially when changing resolution Even though the built-in icon editor can load and save standard RSC files it works with its own CNF format files

✗Can't change resolutions on the fly

✗**No long filename support.** Coming in Ease v5 allegedly

✗**Modal dialogs.** Once an Ease dialog is opened the system is blocked until you exit the dialog again – bad news for a Desktop in a multitasking environment!

✗**Awkward image handling** To load a background image it has to be renamed with a specific filename dependent on the colour depth and placed in the Ease directory Other desktops can load a background image from anywhere via the file selector

✗**Non-standard iconisation.** Instead of a standard iconise icon in the window title line Ease offers an Iconise option in the Window menu which places an icon representing the window on the Desktop This icon remains even after the window has been restored and has to be deleted manually ◆

Creative Calamus

By George Bradford

Creating Simple Graphics With Your Calamus Tools.

Simple clipart is offered through many sources, but for those of you who feel that you would like to add to your collection, here are some easy-to-build Calamus creations that you can make yourself.

The majority of the examples shown here use very simple circle and square techniques, which means you can build them on the spur of the moment, or make them in your spare time and put them on file for future use.

In some ways, the simpler the graphic the more effective it is, and in these examples you will find that most of them require very little effort. The Camera in Figure 1 is a perfect example of this. A series of simple round cornered rectangles, some lines, and some circles. How much simpler could it be? The Present in Figure 2 is even simpler, except for building the bow from heavy white curved lines fitted together. Figure 3 is a stylized envelope built with two horizontal triangular shapes lapping each other with one sent to background. The Cocktail in Figure 4 is a series of shapes and lines, with the toughest part being the join between the black and white parts of the stem. The line for the base was given rounded ends by selecting them in the "Lines" menu.

Figure 5 is a simple Star of David, made from two equilateral triangles, one lapped over the other. The Pot of Gold in Figure 6 again is simpler than it looks. A large oval for the main body of the pot, with thin white bars to flatten the top and base. Add a round ended black rule for the rim and slide a batch of coin circles in behind this. A few angled lines to make up the 'shine' effects, then two small circles for the legs, and you're all done!

The Fish in Figure 7 has endless possibilities and can be stretched or compressed for whatever effect you have room for, a series of triangles for the fins, an oval for the body, a circle for the eye, and a line for the mouth. The Cutlery in Figure 8 gives a very clean effect, and is made up mainly of round-ended white lines, with an oval added for the spoon. With the Ice Cream Cone in Figure 9 a crosshatched 'pattern' was chosen for the fill on the cone triangle. The scoop circle on top is a 12% screen fill with a bold 25% border.

The second group of subject matter starts off with a great Teddy Bear head as shown in Figure 10. You will immediately see the simplicity of this design, made up almost totally of circles. Naturally the body, and appendages of this critter could easily be added using a similar approach, with thick round-ended lines for the arms and legs. This Teddy can be either at an angle as shown, or upright, if preferred. Figure 11 demonstrates the use of heavy round-ended rules and several screens to simulate Drug Capsules, in any arrangement you might require. The Butler or Waiter in Figure 12 shows a little more class, but simplicity overall. I used overweight rules on a vertical round cornered rectangle to produce the shirt cutaway, but a short 40 pt round ended rule would accomplish the same effect. The shoulders were nipped off at an angle with white triangles, and the rest is obvious.

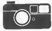


Figure 1

Figure 2

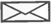


Figure 3

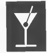


Figure 4

Figure 5

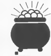


Figure 6

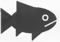


Figure 7

Figure 8

Figure 9

Calamua User, Po Box 148, Daal, Kent, UK, CT14 7QN.

The cloud effect in Figure 13 is a bit more demanding, and the real problem here involves logical grouping and send to back commands, in order to keep the numerous shapes under control I eventually built a wide white frame with transparent interior opening and used this for the final cropping mask The Wind-up Mouse in Figure 14 again will speak for itself Actually it was a 'piece of cake", or should I say "a piece of cheese' The most difficult of all was the Housing Project in Figure 15 This has much the same approach as the clouds in 13, but keeping the rooftop angles under control is quite tricky Naturally the copy area at the top is open to any statement you wish to make

The Lion and Lioness in Figure 16 are so simple and effective that you wonder why you never thought of them before, and again speak for themselves Figure 17 is a great little Christmas Tree made from simple triangles, circles and curved white lines The trunk and stand are rectangles, with white triangles used to nip off the angular sides of the stand The Dessert offering in Figure 18 looks complex, but really adds up to a series of ovals with white borders A round ended line was again used for the rim of the dessert bowl, and a curved line for the cherry stem

Once you have tried making a few of these simple geometric shape style graphics, you will realize just how practical it is, and you would be wise to keep your eyes open for others of this ilk There are hundreds of them out there, and what I show here is just enough to get you started, and build your confidence Again, working at at least 400% enlargement for the finer details will ensure precise fit on delicate areas

This excerpt first appeared in issue four of Calamus User and has been included as the next issue is still under production and will be available in early January

Figure 10

Figure 11

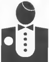


Figure 12

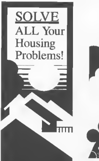


Figure 15

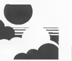


Figure 13

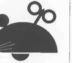


Figure 14

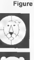


Figure 16

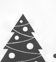


Figure 17

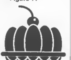


Figure 18

Atari Computing Subscription Form

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Please make all funds payable to the "Atari Computing Group"

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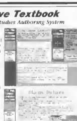

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QUESTIONS ANSWERS

How2ExtractLongFileNames

Q I have downloaded some ZIP files from the Internet, but the files they contain have long Unix-style filenames causing me all kinds of grief when I try and extract them I'm using MagiC v4 is there any way to extract them to "normal" Atari filename format?

ataricomputing conference CIX

A You could upgrade to MagiC v5 which supports long filenames (although there seems to be a few teething troubles with this feature) Alternatively you can install the RAMdisk XFS which supports long filenames under MagiC v4 and make that the destination for the extracted files Now you can rename the files in the RAMdisk to 8+3 style and move them onto your drive

Martyn Dryden

Papyrus Masterclass

Q I use Papyrus for most of my WP and DTP work and am wondering if there is any way to move frequently used elements such as text, boxes tables lines clip art between documents? Papyrus does allow me to export text as an RTF file which I can import into the new document but I lose all the tables and graphical elements I have to resort to redrawing, from scratch boxes and lines then generating the same text and clip art over and over again!

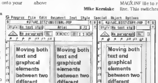
Andy Page Tamworth

A There are some undocumented Papyrus features which do just this! There are two similar procedures, one for copying within the same document the other to copy elements to another document

To duplicate elements within the same document Load the target document and set the zoom setting to Whole page notice the grey clipboard area to the right of your document Select the arrow tool and draw a selection box around the elements to be duplicated which selects them ready for manipulation as a group To copy the elements hold down the [Left Shift] button then click and drag the selected items to the grey clipboard area (to move elements don t hold the [Left Shift] button down) Now move to the location within your document to paste the elements in again select the elements in the clipboard area and holding the [Left Shift] button down again drag into position

Copying elements to another document is basically the same procedure Leave your original document on screen and open another (new or existing) document Arrange the screen so both windows are displayed side by side don t try overlapping them or swapping windows then follow the steps above

Mike Kerslake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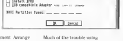
No paragraph
Moving both text and graphical elements between two different Papyrus documents
Moving both text and graphical elements between two different Papyrus documents
Moving both text and graphical elements between two different Papyrus documents

▲An excellent yet undocumented Papyrus feature enables elements to be copied between documents and the clipboard

HD-Driver and MagiC

Q I recently took the plunge and installed MagiC v5 on my Falcon Since then I've experienced corrupted files I m using the latest HD-Driver software what's going on?

A Since v4 (UK) MagiC hsa supported "Background DMA mode" when used in conjunction with the HD-Driver software This can dramatically improve multitasking but should only be used if all of the devices on your SCSI bus support background DMA mode This includes drivers for your hard drive, CD-ROM drive tape streamer scanner SLM printer and so on. If in doubt you must switch background DMA off MetaDOS and the drivers for the SLM604 and SLM605 are examples of drivers which do not support Background DMA.



General Options

☒ Background DMA (MagiC) Boot Drive C
☐ Restart after Reset
☐ Unlock after Reset Buffers for FAT 2
☐ Activate CPU Cache Buffers for Data 2
☒ SCSI Reset on Error Additional Folders 100
☐ SCSI Verify
☐ Fast ACSI
☐ Install XFRB
☐ ICD compatible Adapter
XHDI Partition Types. ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

OK Cancel

Much of the trouble using Background DMA occurs during booting Fortunately there is a handy trick which can be used to make things much more fluid Edit your MAGX.INF file to remove the # TSL line. This switches off pre-emptive multi-tasking during the boot sequence Then if you have the TSLICE CPX set to use pre-emptive multitasking it will be automatically switched back on again when you reach the desktop

Recent versions of MagiC have also included a program called WBDAEMON which enables write caching to speed up disk writes Think carefully before enabling write caching - data is held in memory for a while before writing it to disk so a system crash or power cut can be disastrous In a worst case scenario you could lose every piece of data on your hard disk! Read-ahead caching as featured in HD-Driver is absolutely safe and should be used by everyone

Graeme Rutt

Our team of experts are on hand to investigate and solve almost anything you can throw at them Send your letters to Atari Computing Q&A, 65 Mill Road, Colchester Essex, CO4 5LJ, England Or email them to acg@unactive.compulink.co.uk While we will do our best to answer your question within the pages of Atari Computing we cannot enter into individual correspondence

Humble Pie

In partial reply to T Yusuf's letter in AC#1 Papyrus and Outside certainly do work together – I printed this letter using this combination! Papyrus is v3 66 Outside is v3 10 running on a 4Mb Falcon running MagiC v4 and NVDI v4

Outside is set up with the page size set to 16Kb and 2Mb of alternative memory in RAM and Compatibility Mode switched on This seems to make for a reasonably fast and stable system with most software Occasionally upon loading a document Papyrus claims it is out of memory but then goes ahead and loads the document anyway and doesn t complain again

I did initially have some problems with system crashes whilst printing but this was solved by increasing the printer buffer to 512K. This ensures Papyrus draws this memory from virtual RAM rather than ST RAM where things may be tighter

Martyn Tidd, Crawley

TOS v1.6 bug update

In AC#1 you answered R S Cleaver in Peaceheaven regarding his problem with TOS 1 6 could not save in medium resolution One of the solutions you wrote was to edit the DESKTOP INF file and change the line #E 18 11 to #F 18 12 This doesn t change anything because when you save desktop in medium res on TOS 1 6 you will get a line looking like #E 18 12 Which thanks to the TOS bug re-boots into low resolution The best solution is to make allowances for the TOS bug and edit the line to #E 18 13 Now after a reboot the screen will be in medium resolution #E 18 11 Low res #E 18 12 - Medium res #E 18 13 High res

Joachim Thornblad, Sweden, via the internet

MODEM INITIALISATION

Some modems cannot recognise an intermittent dial tone this can be happen for various reasons for example in the UK, if you have Call Diversion set up if this happens change the initial dial string from ATDT to ATX3DT this tells most Hayes compatible modems not to look for a dial tone and to dial anyway

Brian Stanton, AICIG

Missing mice

My mouse pointer occasionally disappears yet keyboard control still works is there any way to salvage the pointer without rebooting?

Mike Chester Eastbourne

Under TOS you can reset the mouse pointer using the key combination [Control]+[Left Shift]+[Alternate]]+[Keypad] Alternatively accessing a desktop accessory the closing it again sometimes does the trick Hopefully these obscure antics will preserve a few of your flowing locks)

Brian Stanton, AICIG

Falcon problems

I ve been having problems running some programs on the Falcon My normal screen resolution is 640 by 200 in 16/256 colours but some programs such as OPUS and Easy Text only expect 4 colours in this resolution Is there any way to get them to run without having to switch to ST medium resolution?

Steve MacDonald Aberdeen

Use the Change video option in TOS to change to 2 colours 80 columns interlace on and most programs will attempt to use their mono resource files instead! Not all programs will work but it s certainly worth experimenting

Martin Milner, AICIG

Keyboard confusion

My Falcon s keyboard is set up incorrectly with various keys producing the wrong characters It was purchased second-hand and I didn t receive any special software with it

Peter Parker, St Ives

What you want is a nice little CPX module programmed by Jon Ellis called NVCONFIG CPX This allows you to change the settings stored in your Falcon s NVRAM (Non Volatile Random Access Memory) Your keyboard is probably set to a USA one so using this CPX to select a UK keyboard You ll need to reboot once you ve changed the settings but the values will be stored permanently thereafter You ll also notice that you re screen height will be reduced but you can change this by turning off the PAL mode setting in the CPX and rebooting again

Warning! Don t change anything you re not sure about or your Falcon might not reboot properly

Martin Milner, AICIG

Driven to corruption

I recently added a second hard drive to my system and copied some files between partitions and to floppy Several weeks later I discovered lots of corrupt files It is possible to copy from either floppy drive to one of the hard drives without corruption providing only one drive is actually spun-up? I now only use the system with both drives spun-up together but would like to know what is causing this corruption and how to stop it! My system uses the Translator SCSI/ACSI host adapter to interface with the drives

Richard White Somerset

There could be a number of reasons why this corruption is occurring The most common is incorrect SCSI bus termination Some SCSI devices are internally terminated with resistor packages called SIPs (Single In-line

SPEEDY GONZALES

If you re using the CKBD Compose mouse accelerator/keyboard manager programmed by Pascal Fellerich and would like linear doubling of mouse movement go into the MOUSE CPX s polynomial editor and set the following constants

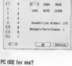
#1 512
#2 0
#3 0

And here is the secret click on the graph to get the accept the parameters and display the resulting curve Now select OK and Save

Oliver Skelton, via CIX

Package) whereas others use an external terminator which plugs into the unused SCSI connector on the device and are much easier to spot It is essential only the device physically at the end of the SCSI bus is terminated and that it has either internal or external termination but not both After checking and eliminating this reason the next most likely cause is a faulty cable between devices or a faulty Translator The easiest way to check for faulty cables is to substitute them - a local user group meeting is the cheapest option otherwise System Solutions can check out your Translator and cables Remember if you open a sealed drive this will invalidate any warranty

Norman Bland, A|C|G



Zusätzliche Ordner: 178

Default-Partitionen 1

PC IDE for me?

Q I currently have a Falcon with an internal 65Mb IDE drive Can I 1) Put a big PC IDE internal drive inside it? 2) Add a SCSI internal/external drive externally and if I could do this would I need any further hardware?

Kevin Cadoo Putney

A You could do either 1) You could put a larger capacity 2 5 inch PC internal IDE drive into your Falcon There isn t room inside the case for the larger 3 5 inch IDE drives but you can by an adapter cable and trail this outside the case and power it using an external power supply ideally housed in a proper casing

2) This is easier option Add a SCSI drive in preference to an IDE drive because it can plug directly into the Falcon s SCSI-2 socket You may also like to consider mounting several external devices in a standard tower case and connecting them to your Falcon using the SCSI-Burster adapter (Ed Covered in News section) Finally if the drive isn t terminated you ll also need a plug-in SCSI terminator

Martin Milner, A|C|G

Removable drives & AHDI

Q Can ZIP drives be used with AHDI? If I use other driver software such as ICD or HD-Driver I get SCSI time-out errors and the HD locks up I had the first SCSI mod done to my Falcon by Atari but never had the revised mod performed because my machine was out of warranty and I'm wondering if this is the problem? I d really like a ZIP drive but don t want to purchase one unless I can get a driver to work with it reliably

Daron M Brewood via CIX

A Both ZIP and EZ-135 drives do work with AHDI and the ICD and HD-Driver software There must be some other problem with your system the two most important things to bear in mind are * ZIP drives can only be set to SCSI ID s 5 or 6 whereas EZ 135 drives can be set to any SCSI ID number * AHDI prefers consecutive SCSI ID numbers starting from ID 0 Using AHDICONF it s possible to persuade AHDI to cope missing SCSI ID numbers

Joe Connor

Sticky CAB

Q Sometimes when loading a web page containing graphics the transfer freezes just before completing the transfer These are usually JPEGs I usually press the [Esc] key to continue loading the page but I'm wondering if there s a better solution the behaviour is repeatable

Rob Withof via the internet

A In most cases if you wait long enough that last block will be transferred you need a little more patience Sometimes a frozen count can resume after a delay of a minute or more! There s a new "Kick" command [Control]+K which can get the transfer going again in some, but not all cases There is one stubborn bug which consistently prevents file completion on a few pages If you encounter a stuck transfer proceed as follows

1 Make a note the position where the transfer fails
2. Wait 15 seconds to allow for normal server delay
3 Press [Control]+K three times in quick succession (once or twice is usually ineffective)
4 If there is no flash on the modem s "RD" LED go to step 6
5 If there was a flash on the modem s "RD" repeat steps 2 and 3
6 Wait another 10 seconds in case the server responds to the kicks
7 If transfer still frozen give up and press the [Esc] key
8. If it is not important to view the page give up
8 If the page is important try clicking the Reload button
10 If the new transfer gets stuck at the same position for the same file you ve hit the bug and transfer will always fail so give up If the transfer sticks somewhere different repeat steps 1 to 10 again until the transfer succeeds!

Ronald Andersson, STiK beta

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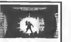

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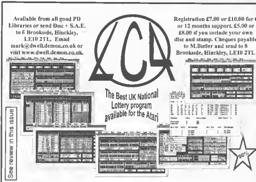

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#3
Dec 96

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